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The Nation

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REVOLT OF THE GENERALS

MILITARY OFFICERS SPEAK OUT AGAINST A FAILED WAR

by RICHARD J. WHALEN

OCTOBER 16, 2006
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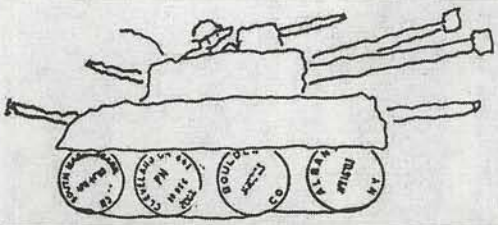

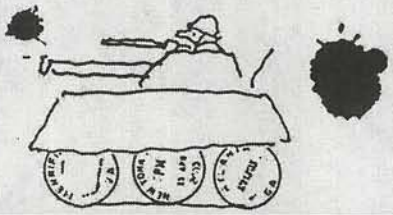

R.O. BLECHMAN

THE VOICE OF MILITARY FAMILIES

Davis, Calif.

■ My son is in the 172nd Stryker Brigade (Army). It recently had its one-year deployment to Iraq extended while in the midst of deploying back to the United States. He is one of the 400 soldiers who had made it back to Fairbanks, Alaska. A few days later he was informed that he was going to be sent back to Iraq. His brigade has been sent to Baghdad to save the occupation.

Don't be fooled by the military commanders' talk of the willingness of these brave men and women. The vast majority of the 4,000 172nd Stryker troops and families are angry and devastated at the last-minute extension. These troops had completed their year in Mosul, passed on their Stryker vehicles and gear to replacement troops and shipped their personal gear home. Worse, their heads were back home, where they had plans for family reunions, weddings and to see children born while they were deployed. Now they are expected to re-gear and reset their minds for battle. They are soldiers. They will do their duty, their mission.

I am a proud member of Military Families Speak Out. We are not an antiwar group; we are an organization of more than 3,000 military families who oppose *this* war, *this* occupation, based on the lies told to start the war and the greed for oil and profits that sustain it. It is *our* loved ones who are dying. Our mission is to support the troops by bringing them home now and taking care of them when they get here. This is only the most recent logistical mismanagement of this war.

To read more of what the Stryker families have to say, go to www.bringhome172nd.org. If you are a military family in need of support, go to www.mfso.org. LAURIE LOVING

Military Families Speak Out, Capital Region

BRAVE NEW DEAL WORLD

Cambridge, Mass.

■ I thank David Rieff for his wide-ranging review of my new book, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* ["We Are the World," July 3]. Rieff's main worry seems to be with the policy prescriptions of the other book he reviews in the same essay, Michael Mandelbaum's *The Case for Goliath*, which focuses on the projected leadership role of the United States in the twenty-first century. My sense is that some of these policy-related concerns may be less salient when considering a work of history, especially where one of my main objectives was to treat the human rights–related rhetoric of the early and mid-1940s on its own terms.

Another of my key interests in researching and writing my book was to recapture what I perceived to be an overlooked historical moment. The existing literature has tended to treat the US role in the international politics of the early 1940s as material to be mined for evidence of early cold war tensions. But before the advent of the full-blown cold war in 1946, the rhetoric of the mature New Deal—notably relating to social and economic rights—blended with wartime ideologies that used constitutional traditions of civil and political rights as a way of highlighting contrasts with Axis ideologies.

The result was fresh articulation of US national interests: a transformation in the idea of human rights that blended social and economic rights with civil and political rights, somewhat along the lines of FDR's famous Four Freedoms (freedom of speech and expression, freedom from want and fear). This brief flowering of a more synthetic hybrid of rights rhetoric—quickly crushed by cold war concerns in the wake of World War II—was what I meant when I used the term "integrated vision of rights," for instance, a term Rieff singles out for derision. Most distressing to me was Rieff's assessment of what I had intended to be a rather nuanced and textured argument about the New Deal itself—how its programs served to "save capitalism" by smoothing down some of the roughest edges of the industrial economy, for instance; how it left out such groups as women and African-Americans, who were not already highly mobilized; and how it privileged elite "experts" and sweeping one-size-fits-all programs.

The "New Deal for the World" of the title tells the story of how these and other facets of the basket of policies and programs that commentators at the time captioned as "the New Deal style" were generalized to the international level by wartime planners designing the United Nations, Bretton Woods and Nuremberg charters. Since the book has two full chapters on the Bretton Woods regime (encompassing the World Bank and IMF) and a long chapter about the genesis of what contemporaries called FDR's "Economic Bill of Rights," I find Rieff's assertion that my presentation of the New Deal is devoid of criticism, or that I don't discuss capitalism, to be especially puzzling.

I am particularly fascinated by the way wartime rhetoric that may have been offered in a somewhat hypocritical or even cynical spirit seemed to take on a dynamic life of its own, inspiring anticolonial activists abroad and antiracism activists at home. I am admittedly less interested in other questions, such as whether particular historical actors ought to have had different sets of concerns than the ones the documents I examined show them as having. Rieff's trenchant criticisms of the political orientation of Madeleine Albright, Anne-Marie Slaughter, Samantha Power and other contemporary analysts seem to suggest that some of his concerns may have more to do with the shortcomings of so-called mainstream liberalism itself rather than my historical portrayal of the way certain mainstream liberals behaved in the early 1940s.

I am appreciative that Rieff puts my work on a spectrum with Mandelbaum's, even if I disagree with his assertion that Mandelbaum and I are part of essentially the same triumphalist project. I was also happy that Rieff considers my book "learned and accessible"—a particular goal I worked hard to achieve. The book recently received the Merle Curti Award from the Organization of American Historians, as the best book in the history of ideas published in 2005, and the Bernath Award from the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations, as the best first book on the history of US foreign relations published in the last year.

I hope that readers who are interested in an analysis of human rights politics in the 1940s that offers a historically grounded critique of realist and neorealist orientations might yet consider seeking out the book, and I would welcome learning of their impressions if and when they do. ELIZABETH BORGWARDT

RIEFF REPLIES

New York City

■ I suppose it is a sign of our self-promoting times that a writer unhappy with a review of her work ends her letter with an itemization of the awards her book has received and a pitch to readers to buy it, even if couched in the bogus democracy of the blogosphere, as when she tells these putative readers she would "welcome learning of their impressions" of her work.

Whatever the awards lavished upon her, Borgwardt begins to give self-regard a bad name when she insists that the material she covers in her book deals with "an overlooked historical moment" or that the existing literature has "tended to treat the US role in the international politics of the early 1940s as material to be mined for evidence of early cold war tensions." This is simply false. As I pointed out in a review that was not without its acknowledgment of the merits of her book, the US role in the shaping of the post–World War II international order, above all the United Nations system, has been

(Continued on Page 24)

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EDITORIALS

Iraq and Reality

Reality can be inconvenient. It can get in the way when politicians are busy with bamboozlement. George W. Bush and his comrades-in-spin have for years pitched their Iraq misadventure as the central front in the "war on terror." We must fight them *there* to prevent them from fighting us *here*, goes their grade-school-level argument, cooked up to replace the WMD argument (which lost its utility in the absence of WMDs). But the recent disclosure of a classified National Intelligence Estimate, first reported by the *New York Times*, has undercut that justification. The NIE, finished in April, noted that Bush's invasion of Iraq and the subsequent—inept and brutal—occupation has led to a rise in Islamic radicalism that has increased the threat posed by global jihadists. "The Iraq conflict has become the 'cause celebre' for jihadists," the NIE says, "breeding a deep resentment of US involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement." To be blunt: Bush & Co. got it exactly wrong.

This is not, alas, very surprising. They have gotten everything about Iraq wrong. And the tragedy is that they need not have. Before the war, experts on terrorism and the Middle East raised the possibility (the probability) that an invasion of Iraq would do more harm than good to the Administration's effort to crush the murderous Al Qaeda and its allies. It was hardly unforeseen that the invasion would sow suspicion and anti-Americanism, which would be invaluable and exploitable for the forces of bin Ladenism. In fact, before the invasion, as this magazine argued—and as our colleague David Corn points out in his book *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War* (written with Michael Isikoff)—just about every problem and challenge that has transpired in the wake of the invasion, from sectarian strife to rampant violence and chaos, was predicted by policy experts within the military, the State Department and the CIA. The Bush White House and the civilian leaders of the Pentagon (Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith) were uninterested in such reality-based policy work. They ignored it because acknowledging such analysis would have been an admission that they were about to engage in something other than a cakewalk, a real drag on the sales campaign for the war.

So now one question is, Does this NIE, which notes that jihadists "are increasing in both number and geographic dispersion," change anything? An NIE is a consensus assessment of the intelligence agencies. The report indicates that the government's best terrorism experts believe the war is a factor in fueling the spread of jihadism. Experts can be wrong; but such a judgment should have given Bush and his aides pause and prompted a strategic review. The White House responded to the NIE leak quickly—and predictably. It initially claimed the stories did not convey the report's nuances. Only under pressure did it release excerpts of the NIE, which indeed warns that the global jihadist movement is spreading and that the war has contributed to this trend.

The White House declines to confront the implications of this conclusion. There is a pattern here. Before the invasion, it refused to see the holes in its case for war or the warnings of the chaos to come. After the invasion, as Iraq slid toward civil war and bedlam, it consistently declared that progress was being made. In September Bush claimed he invaded Iraq because it was a "clear threat"—although it's been demonstrated that Iraq had no unconventional weapons and no ties to Al Qaeda. Throughout the Iraq endeavor, intelligence and analysis have not mattered to Bush or his aides. The mission now is to keep sidestepping such intrusions—all the way through election day.

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Accessories to Torture

These are grim days for the Constitution. At press time, the House had passed the catastrophic "compromise" negotiated by senators McCain & Co. to the President's "enemy combatants" bill, and the Senate was poised to do the same. The only thing compromised is the rule of law; the bill would still strip detainees of the right to appeal, would broaden the President's unilateral powers to decide who is an enemy and which interrogation methods violate the Geneva Conventions, and would fatally undermine the War Crimes Act. The bill is being rushed to passage just days after the Canadian government exonerated Maher Arar, "rendered" by the United States to Syria, imprisoned and tortured for nearly a year.

Did John McCain and his GOP colleagues cave? Yes. In particular, they betrayed the courageous military officers and Pentagon lawyers who for months fought for the rule of law. But the refusal of many Democrats to confront this constitutional crisis is more scandalous. For weeks Harry Reid and other Democratic leaders enjoyed the luxury of sitting on their hands while McCain and other Republicans publicly bucked the White House. But when vigorous Democratic opposition might have slowed the bill until a saner, less politicized moment after the election-season recess, a tepid Senator Reid refused to stand in its way: "We want to do this. And we want to do it in compliance with the direction from the Supreme Court. We want to do it in compliance with the Constitution." Never mind that the whole bill is out of compliance. Patrick Leahy, Democratic leader on the Senate Judiciary Committee, spoke eloquently against the bill's habeas-stripping provisions, but none of the Senate's Democratic lions appeared ready to put up a fight to amend or slow the bill.

As more than 300 law professors wrote in a letter to Congressional leaders, the enemy-combatants debate is "an urgent test of our nation's constitutional and democratic values." At this writing, Democrats as well as Republicans have failed the test.

COMMENT

Mexican Scramble

Mexico City

The Mexican leftist Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who, according to official figures, was very narrowly defeated in Mexico's July 2 presidential election, has received brutal treatment from European and American journalists, who have depicted him as a sore loser and an authoritarian demagogue. To assume that the resolution of the postelection conflict depends solely on his personal whim—as these journalists have repeatedly implied—is an analytical mistake that muddles these complex and tempestuous issues.

Mexico's current conflict has its origins in a multiplicity of factors. That López Obrador, of the center-left Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), made strategic and tactical errors

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COMMENT

and committed rhetorical excesses is unquestionable. When AMLO, as he is known, told President Vicente Fox to "shut up, *chachalaca*!" (a reference to a noisy bird in AMLO's home state of Tabasco), many voters, who still revere the office of the presidency, were offended. Nonetheless, a number of individuals and institutions contributed to the current crisis: Felipe Calderón of the conservative National Action Party (PAN), the triumphant candidate; the mass media (primarily the two major TV networks, both of which have a center-right orientation); Mexico's business elite; and above all, President Fox himself.

Fox won in 2000 on the PAN ticket by incarnating the nation's collective desire to jettison the authoritarian regime led by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which had ruled Mexico for seventy years. But Fox very quickly acquiesced to the murky forces of the old regime. For example, he promised to investigate the crimes from Mexico's "dirty war" against the left in the 1960s and '70s, establishing a Special Prosecutors Office to undertake that difficult task. But the office has accomplished very little.

As Fox stumbled on a variety of fronts, AMLO burst onto the national scene as the mayor of Mexico's capital city and began to snatch the banner of reform from the president with a number of creative, populist initiatives. Thus began a sordid and ferocious confrontation between the two men. Fox took advantage of his presidential bully pulpit in pursuing an obsessive campaign to hinder AMLO. As time passed, the social and political forces in the country began to polarize to an unusual and worrying degree. The election campaign—a long, costly, dirty affair—left wounds and tore the social fabric.

Amid this politically charged environment, approximately a third of the citizenry—most of them, presumably, PRD supporters—remain unsatisfied with the election results. Decades of fraudulent polling have instilled in Mexicans a deep skepticism of the authorities and the electoral machinery. In 2000 many progressives, myself included, switched their votes from the leftist candidate, who was far behind in the polls, to Fox to forestall the triumph of the old ruling party. At the beginning, I believed Fox was a true democrat willing to recognize the ideological plurality of Mexico. I was initially baffled, and then offended, by his blatant activism in favor of his own party's candidate (Calderón) and against AMLO. Fox ceased to be the president of all Mexicans. I understand that in other countries campaigning by the head of state is normal. But Mexico is different. Such behavior is illegal and immediately brings to mind the imperial, omnipotent presidents of the past who appointed their own successors in a secretive rubber-stamp process. Thus, Vicente Fox—the man who broke the PRI's stranglehold on power in 2000—ended up behaving, in some respects, like the predecessors he once denounced.

As soon as the July 2 polling was completed, those disturbed by various aspects of the electoral process joined AMLO's supporters in requesting a complete recount, especially since Calderón's margin of victory was minuscule: 0.56 percent. Calderón consistently said he would respect whatever decision came down from the electoral tribunal, the country's highest election authority. Calderón's rhetoric was legally impeccable but politically insufficient. On September 5 the tribunal certified his victory after rejecting a full recount (the court had earlier decreed that 9 percent of the ballots should be recounted). For many citizens, the court's decision—amid allegations that Fox had aggressively lobbied the judges to rule on Calderón's behalf—merely confirmed what they already believed was a fraud.

Did fraud occur? That question cannot be clearly determined; much documentation is missing, and considerable research must still be undertaken. But many citizens believe that whether or not ballot boxes were stuffed or otherwise manipulated, as AMLO alleges, the process itself was flawed. Indeed, the judges agreed that Fox had behaved improperly by campaigning so openly for Calderón; they also criticized a series of TV commercials, paid for by business interests, that viciously attacked AMLO and linked him to Venezuela's Hugo Chávez.

As president-elect, Calderón now has the opportunity to build bridges to his opponents and to demonstrate his commitment to transparency, democracy and fairness. The best opportunity for him to do this is by supporting a citizen recount. After the election, 800 individuals, businesses and NGOs requested that the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), which managed and administered the election, release the ballots so that civil society can undertake a full recount. The exercise lacks any legal value, but in the current atmosphere a recount could reduce tensions, especially if it confirms the official results.

The IFE now has to choose between two contradictory laws: It can obey electoral legislation that requires it to destroy the ballots, or it can bow to a transparency law and deliver the ballots to the petitioners. It seems that the answer will come in court. The burning of ballots, alas, has a long history in Mexico. In 1988 Carlos Salinas won the presidency as a result of monumental electoral fraud; months later, the ruling PRI (along with the PAN) approved a legislative initiative to burn the ballots. In doing so, it destroyed crucial evidence about a stolen election and confirmed the worst suspicions of its opponents. This time around the ballots are once again set to be incinerated, though the date is pending. If there's a bonfire, the opportunity for social harmony will evaporate and Mexico will experience a retreat to its authoritarian past.

Access to public information is an essential pillar of democracy. Amid the pending legal battle between the citizen recount petitioners and the IFE, Calderón will buttress his democratic credentials if he supports the citizen recount. He could even encourage the participation of conservative civil society organizations, to lend it greater authenticity. It's clear that a citizen recount will take place only if sufficient pressure is brought to bear. Although the campaign for one has a dynamic independent of actions pursued by López Obrador, it will be affected by the September 16 decision by hundreds of thousands of his supporters to name him "the legitimate president" in a "National Democratic Convention." López Obrador's social mobilization is one of the factors that are making the future unpredictable. For the time being, Mexico's feeble democracy is at risk. SERGIO AGUAYO QUEZADA

Sergio Aguayo Quezada, a professor at El Colegio de México, is a columnist at Reforma. *Alfonsina Peñaloza contributed to this commentary.*

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COMMENT

The FCC Scandal

Media policy-making, with its overwhelming bias toward corporate consolidation, dumbed-down content and bottom-line decision-making, has been properly described for some time as "scandalous." Now the quotation marks can be removed; the scandal is official. In September came revelations that Federal Communications Commission officials had, since 2003, blocked the release of major reports that showed the danger of allowing a handful of media conglomerates to control communications. The suppression of the reports dramatically illustrates how an agency charged with protecting the public interest instead does the bidding of the telecommunications corporations it should regulate. One report found that locally owned television stations provide 20 percent more local news than stations owned by the broadcast behemoths. Another detailed a 35 percent drop in the number of independently owned radio stations following the removal of most ownership caps by the 1996 Telecommunications Act. Taken together, the reports make a powerful argument against moves by the Bush Administration and the FCC's Republican majority to further undermine ownership limits.

After whistleblowers revealed details of the suppression of the reports, thirty-four House members demanded that the FCC's inspector general launch an investigation. "We believe that a full accounting of the circumstances surrounding the possible suppression of these reports is essential if the FCC is to be perceived as acting in good faith on media ownership issues by Congress and the American people," they argued. Feeling pressure, FCC chair Kevin Martin agreed to an investigation. But the scandal has not slowed Martin's rush to promote further consolidation with a new round of rule changes that are expected to include an attempt to eliminate the ban on cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcast outlets. Such a shift would allow one corporation to own newspapers, television and radio stations, the cable system and the busiest Internet sites in one community. This would create media "company towns" where the discourse is defined by a single newsroom. That means big profits for firms that own the "news," and big democracy deficits for citizens—which is why 3 million Americans opposed an FCC move to ease ownership limits when the issue arose in 2003.

A federal appeals court blocked implementation of the changes favored by the FCC majority then, but Martin is now attempting to write rules that pass legal muster. Dissident commissioners Michael Copps and Jonathan Adelstein are demanding that Martin hold public hearings on proposed policies, and they've worked with media reformers to open up the process by organizing unofficial town meetings involving religious, senior-citizen, minority and community groups. But, as Copps notes, the expressions of grassroots opposition to further consolidation have garnered scant mainstream media coverage. Congressional pressure will help, especially if Democrats recognize that reforming media policies is smart policy and smart politics.

There is a dawning awareness that something is fundamentally wrong with the way American media operate. The Save the Internet campaign to preserve the principle of net neutrality and prevent development of a multi-tiered Internet—where websites that pay for the privilege are easily reached, while those that can't pay are rendered inaccessible—has turned into a pitched battle to prevent old-media telephone and cable firms from colonizing new media. At the same time, communities are waking up to the crisis created by outside ownership of local newspapers, as evidenced by the fight to prevent the gutting of the *Los Angeles Times* by its distant Tribune Company owners. Pressure from journalists and citizens could force the sale of the *Times* to local investors who are exploring new ownership models.

While it's exciting to ponder the prospect of returning so large a property as the *Times* to conscientious local ownership, the trend is still toward bigness and consolidation. That's why it's vital to expose the past failures by the FCC to uphold the public interest and to prevent the agency from further loosening ownership rules. That's also why it is essential to elect a Congress willing to crack down on consolidation by writing rules that encourage localism, diversity of ownership, competition and a renewed commitment to fostering a democratic discourse. JOHN NICHOLS

CALVIN TRILLIN

On the Intelligence Report Finding That the War in Iraq Has Produced a New Generation of Jihadists and Increased Terrorism

"One of the hardest parts of my job is to connect Iraq to the war on terror." —George W. Bush to Katie Couric

Iraq's connected, just as Bush implied—
Producing fighters for the other side.
If we just stay the course and not take flight,
We'll never lack for terrorists to fight.

Test on Terrorism

On September 11 a midlevel magistrate named Norbert Garney filed legal papers in an El Paso, Texas, court recommending that notorious Cuban-exile terrorist Luis Posada Carriles be set free. In response to a petition of habeas corpus filed by Posada's lawyers, Garney's twenty-three-page "Report and Recommendation" (R&R) concluded that the Bush Administration had failed to avail itself of basic legal procedures to keep Posada in jail. Posada "was never certified by the Attorney

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GOOD NEWS FOR DOCTORS AND PAIN PATIENTS

On August 22, 2006 the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals granted a new trial for a Virginia pain specialist who was recently sentenced to 25 years for mis-prescribing narcotics. The Court ruled that the trial judge erred when he refused to let the jury hear the doctor's basic defense - that he intended to help these people. The 4th Circuit decision means that doctors acting "in good faith" have a right to let the jury hear that evidence.[1]

Two weeks later there was another hopeful sign, this time from the Drug Enforcement Administration. The agency's latest policy statement makes a serious attempt to reassure doctors that they will not be targeted just for prescribing large quantities of opiates.[2]

The agency also reversed course on their prohibition against multiple prescriptions. Once again patients who have difficulty getting to the doctor will be able to obtain their medicine for up to three months.[3]

While the merit of all this may seem obvious to an outsider, it took the combined efforts of dozens of medical experts, attorneys, pain specialists, academics, activists and officials to bring about these improvements.[4] We hope the 30 million Americans who are under-treated for chronic pain will benefit.

Common Sense for Drug Policy
www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org www.DrugWarFacts.org
www.ManagingChronicPain.org www.MedicalMJ.org
www.TreatingDrugAddiction.org www.info@csdp.org

1) http://www.csdp.org/news/news/054474p.pdf 2) http://www.csdp.org/research/E6-14517.pdf
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COMMENT

General as a terrorist or danger to the community" under the Patriot Act, according to the R&R, nor had the Justice Department presented evidence of "special circumstances" that would allow it to hold Posada for security or terrorism concerns. In light of those findings, the magistrate wrote, "the Court recommends that Petitioner's request for habeas relief be granted, and that [Posada] be released."

The Bush Administration is now facing the moment of truth in its handling of Posada's case. Long considered the godfather of vicious anti-Castro violence, Posada—*aka* Bambi, Comisario Basilio and Ramon Medina—has practiced the art of sabotage, bombing and attempted assassination for much of his 78 years. Yet unlike the way that many terror suspects with Middle Eastern names have been rounded up by US authorities and detained indefinitely under special anti-terrorism provisions, the Department of Homeland Security has chosen to treat the Posada problem as a simple "illegal entry" immigration proceeding. Any "special circumstances" appear to have more to do with Posada's tenure with the CIA in the 1960s, his politically powerful right-wing Cuban-American allies in Florida and with Washington's hostile relationship with Venezuela, from where, in 1985, Posada escaped from incarceration as a mastermind of the October 6, 1976, midair bombing of Cubana Flight 455, which killed all seventy-three passengers on board.

Since Posada was arrested May 17, 2005, after sneaking into the United States and flaunting his presence in Miami for almost two months, the Administration has struggled to avoid the political problems of prosecuting him as well as the hypocrisy of setting him free. For more than a year, the Administration has refused to respond to a formal extradition petition filed by Venezuela and instead has sought to deport Posada to a third country other than Venezuela or Cuba. (If the Administration denied the petition outright, it would be obligated under the 1973 Montreal Convention to put Posada on trial for that crime in the United States.) So far, as described in court records, US officials have attempted "to secure travel documents" for Posada to Canada, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, El Salvador, Mexico and Guatemala. All have said no.

Only in March, when the court was poised to release Posada on bail, did the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office issue an "Interim Decision to Continue Detention" identifying his proclivity for terrorism. "You have a history of engaging in criminal activity, associating with individuals involved in criminal activity, and participating in violent acts that indicate a disregard for the safety of the general public," the ICE stated in a letter to Posada. "Due to your long history of criminal activity and violence in which innocent civilians were killed, your release from detention would pose a danger to both the community and the national security of the United States."

But that letter is insufficient to hold Posada, according to Garney's R&R; the evidence behind it or a certification by Attorney General Alberto Gonzales that Posada is a terrorist must be presented to the immigration court. Certainly the evidence is overwhelming. The Posada files include court records of his conviction in Panama on charges of endangering public safety after he was caught in November 2000 with thirty-three pounds of C-4 explosives in yet another plot to assassinate Castro; his admissions in 1997 to Ann Louise Bardach of the *New York Times* that he had orchestrated a series of hotel bombings in Havana that took the life of an Italian businessman; and volumes of US intelligence documents that identify him as one of the perpetrators of the 1976 bombing of the Cubana jet. "We are going to hit a Cuban airplane," a secret CIA intelligence cable reported Posada as saying days before the aircraft exploded after takeoff from Barbados.

As the thirtieth anniversary of that atrocity approaches, Posada has become a litmus test of George W. Bush's mantra that no nation should harbor terrorists and that every nation must do its part in bringing those who commit acts of terrorism to justice. Families of those who perished on the plane are bringing pressure on the Administration to hold Posada accountable. In Cuba the Communist Party newspaper, *Granma*, published a declaration on September 19 from the Comité de Familiares de las Victimas that stated, "Unlike the families of the 9/11 victims...we know where those who assassinated our families are, who is protecting them, and who is harboring them." In a letter dated September 20 to Attorney General Gonzales, Roseanne Nenninger, the sister of Raymond Persaud, a 19-year-old Guyanese medical student killed on the plane, appealed "in the name of justice for my brother, and the other 72 passengers of that doomed plane," for Posada to be certified as a terrorist. "If Luis Posada Carriles does not meet the definition of a terrorist," she noted, "it is truly hard to imagine who does."

Even so, the White House appears internally conflicted on how or even whether to proceed. On September 21 the Justice Department filed papers requesting an extension to respond to Garney. The government's motion labeled Posada "an admitted criminal" and "a terrorist alien" whose release "could have significant national and foreign relations consequences." But "due to the nature and complexity of the case," government lawyers declared, "additional time is necessary to conclude the consultations and deliberations within the United States Government."

The extension request, through October 5, means that the Administration's decision will likely become public on the actual anniversary of the bombing of Cubana Flight 455. It is against that historic backdrop of the most heinous act of international terrorism ever committed in Latin America that the fate of Luis Posada Carriles could be determined—and along with it, the credibility of the President's anti-terrorist campaign.

PETER KORNBLUH

Peter Kornbluh directs the Cuba Documentation Project at the National Security Archive. Declassified records on Luis Posada Carriles are available at www.nsarchive.org.

ON THE WEB: Max Blumenthal reports on James Dobson's election-day marching orders to the faithful. Nicholas von Hoffman dissects the *Forbes* 400 list of the richest Americans. Dave Zirin reads the signs in New Orleans as the Saints return to the Superdome (www.thenation.com).

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A Meta-Read Is a Better Read

Mark Halperin and John F. Harris, authors of *The Way to Win: Taking the White House in 2008*, represent the pinnacle of America's insider journalistic elite. As the political director of ABC News and national political editor of the *Washington Post*, respectively, they are the go-to guys not only for the latest skinny on who's up and who's down but also on the more significant question of What It All Means. As the driving intellectual force behind ABC News's blog The Note, Halperin may be insiderdom's most influential commissar. Karl Rove has remarked that in Bush's White House, Halperin is thought of as "some kind of minor deity." By virtue of both his position and his smarts, Harris, too, exercises considerable power over the collective mind of the so-called Gang of 500. So it is no surprise that their book offers the equivalent of a psychological X-ray of power in Washington.

Sometimes inadvertently, *The Way to Win* provides a unique window on the perpetual spin machine we call "news." Judging by the evidence presented here, the notion that the function of the journalist is to explain "the truth" about politics to American citizens is about as quaint as America's participation in the Geneva Conventions. Insider journalists are barely less politicians than the politicians themselves. Hardly anyone leaves the party without a metaphorical goody bag. Rove's is so stacked with illustrations of his superhuman genius, I doubt he can lift it.

Al Gore, on the other hand, goes home pretty much empty-handed. This, too, is revealing. When recounting their "Trade Secrets" of the 2000 campaign, for instance, the authors, regarding the "Al Gore is a liar" motif, admit that "nearly every one of these controversies was overplayed or mischaracterized by the Old and New Media" and that it "might be unfair, but that does not alter the fact that Gore violated numerous Trade Secrets by neglecting to confront the stories." In fact, as the Daily Howler website never tired of pointing out, it was the authors' own news organizations that led the dishonest pack, consistently producing coverage that ignored Gore's actual words, contextually reported, and instead repeated the malicious misinformation provided by RNC press releases. When, for instance, Gore accurately described his role in bringing attention to the pollution problems of Love Canal—maintaining that he said he "discovered" them in the sense that you discover something you were searching for—the *Post*'s astonishingly hostile reporter Ceci Connolly wrote, "Add Love Canal to the list of verbal missteps by Vice President Gore.... The man who mistakenly claimed to have inspired the movie 'Love Story' and to have invented the Internet says he didn't quite mean to say he discovered a toxic waste site." Never mind that Gore was right about his role in Love Canal—he also accurately recounted his role in inspiring *Love Story*. Ha-ha-ha, who cares? Over at ABC, Cokie Roberts asked, "Isn't he saying that he discovered Love Canal when he had hearings on it after people had been evacuated?" And William Kristol jumped in with the phony *Washington Post*/RNC version of Gore's quote: "I found a little place in upstate New York called Love Canal. I was the one that started it all." Gore was right and these reporters were wrong. And yet, according to our authors' Trade Secrets, this is all somehow Gore's fault.

One sees a similar dynamic when the authors write, "Bush was effective in dressing his conservative aims in centrist clothing because so many reporters admired the wardrobe." True, in part, but a better explanation is that reporters liked Bush and loathed Gore, something the authors acknowledge but do not address in sufficient detail, much less explain in the context of the alleged liberal bias they so frequently profess to detect. Recall the now-infamous scene in New Hampshire, for instance, unmentioned in this book, during an early Democratic debate, when the room of 300 reporters, according to *Time* magazine, "erupted in a collective jeer, like a gang of 15-year-old Heathers cutting down some hapless nerd," whenever Gore made a forceful point.

The media's tilt toward Bush was evident not only in their refusal to look too closely at Bush's Texas record, which clearly belied his moderate rhetoric, but also at his past. "How and why the Democrats and most of the national press did not make [Bush's likely evasion of his National Guard responsibilities and the favoritism that got him his post in the first place] a prominent issue during Bush's first run is a curiosity," write the authors. "Bush's Vietnam-era history had produced a spark but not a fire."

In fact, the *Boston Globe* was alone among mainstream news organizations in taking the story seriously. *Globe* reporter Walter Robinson pointed out numerous contradictions and dishonest recapitulations of the official Bush record. The story could—and should—have led to further investigations, which it finally did four years later, in the ill-fated CBS News/Dan Rather episode. But the mainstream media just weren't interested in 2000, when it mattered most. Most news organizations ignored the story. A few praised it but ignored or mischaracterized its key findings. As with Bush's shady stock dealings and other questionable actions in his long record of irresponsibility—delineated in great detail in an investigative piece published in *Talk* magazine—virtually nothing that strayed from the "Bush is a dope but a likable one, while Gore is liar, and a smug, supercilious one at that" line entered the discourse. As Cokie Roberts so thoughtfully explained, "The story line is, Bush isn't smart enough and Gore isn't straight enough. In Bush's case, you know he's just misstating as opposed to it playing into a story line about him being a serial exaggerator." That quote appears nowhere between these covers.

I'm not saying don't read this book. It contains a razor-sharp analysis of the upper stratum of American politics available nowhere else. But a meta-read is a better read. See just how intricately the mainstream media have implicated themselves in Karl Rove's culture of deceit, manipulation and contempt for the practice not only of journalism but of democracy. In other words, read it and weep... ■

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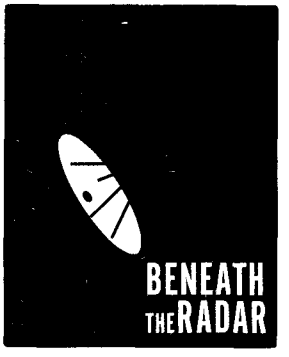
GARY YOUNGE

Blair, Brown, Blah



Before the general election in 2005, British Prime Minister Tony Blair said he would step down before the next one, due in 2010 at the latest. Since then, his days in Downing Street have been numbered. The trouble is, nobody has known what that precise number would be.

For the past five years, Chancellor and heir apparent Gordon Brown has been trying to pry that figure from the Labour leader by forcing him to set a date. By all accounts the two men loathe each other. When Blair returned from vacation in late August to say he wouldn't set a timetable for his departure, discontent spread to some of his supporters in Parliament. After a spate of midlevel resignations and two tempestuous meetings with Brown, Blair said this September's Labour conference would be his last.

When it comes to dysfunctional relationships lived in public, Blair and Brown have shown about as much class as Whitney Houston and Bobby Brown (no relation) without even a scintilla of the entertainment value. What is worse, for the last decade an indecent portion of the British left has become embroiled in this quarrel as though the two men's career paths represent principled ideological differences. Midlife crises have been elevated to affairs of state; petulance masquerades as principle.

Two principal factors have brought Blair's premiership to this point—his foreign policy and the presence of a new, viable Conservative leader. Both raise serious and urgent questions about Labour's direction; the trouble is that Brown has so far proven himself incapable of answering them.

The week Blair was first elected, in 1997, he told Labour MPs, "We are not the master now. The people are the masters. We are the servants of the people." Within five years he had become a servant of the Bush Administration.

The war in Iraq has always been hugely unpopular; the obstruction of an early cease-fire in Lebanon was even more so. The week the feud between Brown and Blair was at its most intense coincided with the one in which Britain suffered its greatest number of casualties in Afghanistan and NATO conceded that the mission there could fail without more troops.

A poll in September revealed that almost three-quarters of the British public (73 percent) believe that "the British Government's foreign policy—especially its support for the invasion of Iraq and refusal to demand an immediate cease-fire by Israel in the recent war against Hezbollah in Lebanon—has significantly increased the risk of terrorist attacks on Britain."

Moreover, almost two-thirds (62 percent) agree that "in order to reduce the risk of future terrorist attacks on Britain the Government should change its foreign policy, in particular by distancing itself from America, being more critical of Israel and declaring a timetable for withdrawing from Iraq."

So long as the opposition Tory party, which also backed the war, had no chance of winning, none of this mattered because the electorate had nowhere else to go and no reason to go there.

But after a decade in the wilderness choosing leaders whose worldview could be hung from a handlebar mustache, the Tories finally picked an electable leader in David Cameron. To be fair to Cameron's predecessors, the reason they had so much trouble distinguishing themselves from Blair is that Blair had moved so far to the right they had little room to maneuver. What Cameron realized was that if he couldn't run on his politics he could always win through his personality. Here was a Conservative leader, not yet 40, who rubbed his wife's pregnant stomach lovingly on stage and cycled to work and had taken copious amounts of drugs—or at least he wouldn't say he hadn't, which in Britain amounts to the same thing.

With these credentials, Cameron only needed to make slight nods toward moderation. Morally speaking, he was starting from a very low base. He said the Tories were wrong to support apartheid and oppose the release of Nelson Mandela. More significant, on the fifth anniversary of September 11, he said: "We should be solid but not slavish in our friendship with America."

His stock soared. For the first time in nine years it looks like Labour could lose the next election. It is clear Blair is the problem, but it is no less obvious that Brown does not provide the solution. Personality-wise he does not hold a candle to Cameron. One recent focus group echoed many polls in describing Brown as tired, dishonest and treacherous.

Recent polls show that roughly two-thirds of the electorate believe Labour is not working in their interest, has run out of ideas and is moving in the wrong direction. As the co-architect of New Labour, Brown not only helped decide that direction but has pledged to continue it. "You taught our party—you saw it right, you saw it clearly and you saw it through—that we can't just be for one section of society, we've got to be for all of society," he told Blair from the conference podium.

The most effective and popular policy change Brown could propose, which almost certainly would secure his victory at the polls, is a break with Blair over Iraq. Instead, he has praised Iraq's "liberation" and has promised to continue supporting it.

The leader will be chosen through a ballot of party members, trade unions and MPs. The party's left has another candidate but is too weak to mount an effective challenge to Brown; the Blairite wing may yet put up a candidate who will propose even less in the way of change. Next spring we are set not for Brown's election but his coronation.

"Kings were put to death long before 21 January 1793," wrote Albert Camus, referring to Louis XVI's execution. "But regicides of earlier times and their followers were interested in attacking the person, not the principle, of the king. They wanted another king, and that was all. It never occurred to them that the throne could remain empty forever."

Labour is poised to change kings; what it needs to do is abolish the monarchy. ■

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ARTICLES

REVOLT OF THE GENERALS

MILITARY OFFICERS SPEAK OUT AGAINST A FAILED WAR

BY RICHARD J. WHALEN

A revolt is brewing among our retired Army and Marine generals. This rebellion—quiet and nonconfrontational, but remarkable nonetheless—comes not because their beloved forces are bearing the brunt of ground combat in Iraq but because the retirees see the US adventure in Mesopotamia as another Vietnam-like, strategically failed war, and they blame the errant, arrogant civilian leadership at the Pentagon. The dissenters include two generals who led combat troops in Iraq: Maj. Gen. Charles Swannack Jr., who commanded the 82nd Airborne Division, and Maj. Gen. John Batiste, who led the First Infantry Division (the "Big Red One"). These men recently sacrificed their careers by retiring and joining the public protest.

In late September Batiste, along with two other retired senior officers, spoke out about these failures at a Washington Democratic policy hearing, with Batiste saying Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was "not a competent wartime leader" who made "dismal strategic decisions" that "resulted in the unnecessary deaths of American servicemen and women, our allies and the good people of Iraq." Rumsfeld, he said, "dismissed honest dissent" and "did not tell the American people the truth for fear of losing support for the war."

This kind of protest among senior military retirees during wartime is unprecedented in American history—and it is also deeply worrisome. The retired officers opposing the war and demanding Rumsfeld's ouster represent a new political force, and therefore a potentially powerful factor in the future of our democracy. The former generals' growing lobby could acquire a unique veto power in the future by publicly opposing reckless civilian warmaking in advance.

No one should be surprised by the antiwar dissent emerging among those who have commanded our legions on the fringes of the US military empire. After more than sixty-five years of increasingly centralized and secret presidential warmaking, we have concentrated ultimate civilian authority in fewer and fewer hands. Some of these leaders have been proved by events to be incompetent.

I speak regularly to retired generals, former intelligence officers and former Pentagon officials and aides, all of whom remain close to their active-duty friends and protégés. These well-informed seniors tell me that whatever the original US objective was in Iraq, our understrength forces and flawed strategy have failed, and that we cannot repair this failure by remaining there indefinitely. Fundamental changes are needed, and senior officers are prepared to make them. According to my sources, some active-duty officers are working behind the scenes to end the war and are preparing for the inevitable US withdrawal. "The only question is whether a war serves the national interest," declares a retired three-star general. "Iraq does not."

How widespread is antiwar feeling among the retired and active-duty senior military? And does it extend into the younger active-duty officer corps? These are unanswerable questions. The soldiers who defend our democracy on the battlefield fight within military, and therefore nondemocratic, organizations. They are

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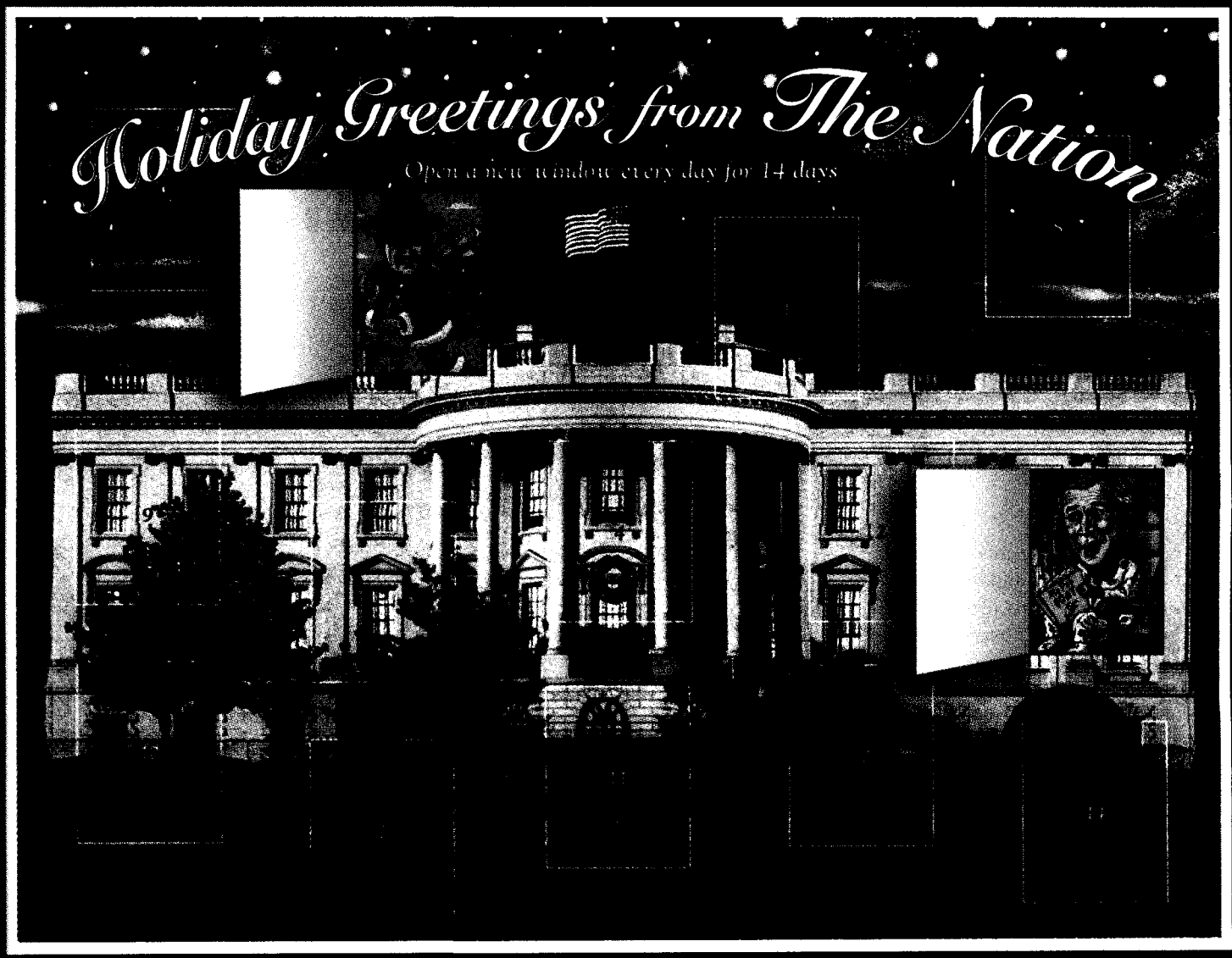

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sworn to uphold the Constitution and obey orders. Traditionally, they debate only on the "inside."

Earlier this year, Gen. George Casey, the top American commander in Iraq, drafted a highly classified briefing plan that was leaked to the *New York Times* in June. It called for sharply reducing US troop levels in Iraq from the current fourteen combat brigades to a half-dozen or so by late December 2007. The plan contained a great many caveats, and events soon rendered it obsolete. Now General Casey says the Iraqi security forces may be ready to take the lead role in twelve to eighteen months, but he says nothing about troop withdrawals.

Casey's leaked plan revealed the thinking of some of today's top-level officers. These senior military men believe that our forces will have to win the potentially decisive battle for Baghdad before the United States can leave. In August the Army announced an urgent transfer of American forces from insecure western Iraq to the capital in preparation for that coming battle. The move barely doubled the number of troops in Baghdad, to only 14,000 GIs spread over a sprawling metropolis with a population exceeding 7 million.

On August 3 the commander of US forces in the Middle East, Gen. John Abizaid, the universally respected, Arabic-speaking warrior-scholar who knows Iraq intimately, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that worsening Iraqi sectarian violence, especially in Baghdad, "could move [Iraq] towards civil war." In private, senior officers openly refer to civil war, and have indicated that the Army would depart in such circumstances to avoid being caught in the crossfire.

The dissenting retired generals are bent on making Iraq this nation's last strategically failed war—that is, one doggedly waged by civilian officials largely to avoid personal accountability for their bad decisions. A failed war causes mounting human and other costs, damaging or entirely destroying the national interest it was supposed to serve.

Let me interject a personal note. At the height of the Vietnam War, between 1966 and 1968, I was a conservative Republican in my early 30s on the campaign staff of the likely next President, Richard Nixon. What I heard from junior officers returning from Vietnam convinced me that US military involvement there should give way to diplomacy. We no longer had a coherent political objective, and were fighting only to avoid admitting defeat. I wrote Nixon's secret plan for "ending the war and winning the peace," a rhetorical screen for striking a summit deal with the Soviet Union, followed by a historic opening to China that would allow us to extricate ourselves from what we belatedly recognized was an anti-Chinese Indochina.

After I left Nixon's staff in August 1968, I helped end the draft. In 1969–70, I co-wrote and edited the *Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force*. Our blockbuster proposal to end the draft combined political expediency and libertarian idealism. Our staff's numbers crunchers calculated that if we raised enlisted men's pay scales, retention rates among the sons of lower- to middle-income families would stay high enough to create a de facto all-volunteer Army. So why not take credit for acting on principle? Nixon's domestic adviser Martin Anderson pushed it, the private computers of consultant Alan Greenspan (who would go on to become chair of the Federal Reserve System) confirmed it and I delivered the text that the commission accepted. Nixon, for once, enjoyed the media's acclaim. The draft was swiftly abolished.

The Iraq War only confirms the wisdom of the nation's commitment to the all-volunteer armed forces. A draft would merely prolong the Iraq agony, not avoid defeat. More than 2,700 GIs killed and more than 20,000 wounded, along with tens of thousands of dead and wounded Iraqis, are enough to carry on the nation's conscience.

Some of the officers from the first generation of the volunteer Army, now mostly retired, are speaking out and influencing their active-duty colleagues. Retired Lieut. Gen. William Odom calls the Iraq War "the worst strategic mistake in the history of the United States" and draws a grim parallel with the Vietnam War. He says that US strategy in Iraq, as in Vietnam, has served almost exclusively the interests of our enemies. He says that our objectives in Vietnam passed through three phases leading to defeat. These were: (1) 1961–65, "containing" China; (2) 1965–68, obsession with US tactics, leading to "Americanization" of the war; and (3) 1968–75, phony diplomacy and self-deluding "Vietnamization." Iraq has now completed two similar phases and is entering the third, says Odom, now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute. In March he wrote in the newsletter of Harvard's Nieman Foundation:

> Will Phase Three in Iraq end with U.S. helicopters flying out of Baghdad's Green Zone? It all sounds so familiar. The difference lies in the consequences. Vietnam did not have the devastating effects on U.S. power that Iraq is already having. On this point, those who deny the Vietnam-Iraq analogy are probably right. They are wrong, however, in believing that staying the course will have any result other than making the damage to U.S. power far greater than would changing course and making an orderly withdrawal.... But even in its differences, Vietnam can be instructive about Iraq. Once the U.S. position in Vietnam collapsed, Washington was free to reverse the negative trends it faced in NATO and U.S.-Soviet military balance, in the world economy, in its international image, and in other areas. Only by getting out of Iraq can the United States possibly gain sufficient international support to design a new strategy for limiting the burgeoning growth of anti-Western forces it has unleashed....

The fact that so many retired generals are speaking out against the war and against Rumsfeld, and are doing so at such forums as New York's prestigious Council on Foreign Relations, reflects the depth and intensity of the military's dissent. Traditional discipline and career-protecting reticence prompt many disillusioned field-grade officers (majors and above) to keep silent. These are "the Carlisle elite," who attend the US Army War College in

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Richard J. Whalen, a former senior editor of Time *and* Fortune, *is the author of several books, including* The Founding Father: The Story of Joseph P. Kennedy *and* Catch the Falling Flag: A Republican's Challenge to His Party. *He writes and publishes "The Big Picture," a fortnightly letter on politics and finance, and is currently working on* In the Name of National Security, *a personal and political history of the domestic impact of America's wars since Pearl Harbor.*

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Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and from whose ranks are selected the generals and top leaders of tomorrow.

The military's senior active-duty leadership will not openly revolt. "We're not the French generals in Algeria," says the well-read retired Marine Lieut. Gen. Gregory Newbold. "But we damned well know that the Iraq War we've won militarily is being lost politically." Newbold wrote in a *Time* magazine essay: "I retired from the military four months before the [March 2003] invasion, in part because of my opposition to those who had used 9/11's tragedy to hijack our security policy." Newbold calls the Iraq War "unnecessary" and says the civilians who launched the war acted with "a casualness and swagger" that are "the special province" of those who have never smelled death on a battlefield.

When civilian Pentagon officials bungled the long, dishonorable endgame of the Vietnam War, disciplined senior soldiers kept silent. After that war ended in US defeat and humiliation, a flood of firsthand military accounts of the war appeared. Embittered generals and other officers, like future general Colin Powell, vowed it would never happen again.

'Our opposition to Rumsfeld is all about his accountability for getting Iraq wrong from day one.' —Lieut. Gen. Gregory Newbold (Ret.)

Today, a retired major general privately asserts: "For our generation, Iraq will be Vietnam with the volume turned way up. Three decades ago, the retired generals who are now speaking out against the Iraq War were junior officers in Vietnam. The seniors who trained and mentored us, and who became generals but who kept silent, did not speak out after retirement against Vietnam." Now, even before the Iraq War has ended, generals have shed their uniforms and begun publicly to fight back against Rumsfeld's bullying and a new generation of Pentagon civilians' bloodstained mistakes. These former generals despise Rumsfeld, with several, like Batiste, describing him as totally dismissive of their views. They recall repeatedly trying to warn Rumsfeld before the Iraq invasion that the US forces he was planning to deploy were barely half the 400,000 they said were needed.

Rumsfeld publicly humiliated all who dissented, beginning with Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki, who was virtually dismissed the day he honestly gave his views to Congress. Rumsfeld's deputy, neoconservative ideologue Paul Wolfowitz, listened respectfully before rejecting the generals' advice. As the Iraqi insurgency grew, the generals found Rumsfeld "completely unable and unwilling to understand the collapse of security in Iraq," says Army Maj. Gen. Paul Eaton, now retired. The severely understrength US forces have never been able to provide adequate security. Once Iraqi civilians lost their trust and confidence in America's protection, the war was lost politically. As General Newbold says: "Our opposition to Rumsfeld is all about his accountability for getting Iraq wrong from day one."

Bureaucratic accountability comes hard and very slowly. According to a stark consensus of global terrorism trends by America's sixteen separate espionage agencies, the US invasion and occupation of Iraq "helped spawn a new generation of Islamic radicalism and [expand] the overall terrorist threat." This highly classified National Intelligence Estimate is, according to the *New York Times*, "the first report since the war began to present a comprehensive picture" of global terrorism trends.

There's blame enough to go around. In his recently published bestseller *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Thomas Ricks, the *Washington Post*'s senior Pentagon correspondent, offers a devastating, heavily documented indictment of almost incredible civilian and military shortsightedness and incompetence, such as the foolish decisions that encouraged the Iraqi insurgency. "When we disbanded the Iraqi Army, we created a significant part of the Iraqi insurgency," explains Col. Paul Hughes, whose advice to retain the army was rejected. Before he retired he told Ricks, "Unless we ensure that we have coherency in our policy, we will lose strategically." The most critical political-strategic decisions about post-Saddam Iraq's future were made by deeply mistaken civilian officials in Washington and in the Green Zone by our "viceroy," Paul Bremer, administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority.

The senior military dissenters will not rest until they indict the mistakes of Rumsfeld and his principal civilian aides at Congressional hearings. The military always plays this game of accountability for keeps. Should the Democrats gain control of a Congressional chamber in the November midterms, televised Capitol Hill hearings in 2007 will feature military protagonists speaking of "betrayal" and "tragically wasted sacrifices." The retired generals believe nothing would be gained, and much would be lost, by keeping the truth about Iraq from the families of America's dead and wounded.

Says retired two-star General Eaton: "The repeated rotations of Army Reservists and National Guardsmen are hollowing out the US ground forces. This whole thing in Iraq is going to fall off a cliff.... Yet we have a moral obligation to see this thing [the Iraqi occupation] through. If we fail, it will cause America grave problems for several decades to come." These earnest, if contradictory, sentiments echo what some conflicted US military officers told me thirty-five years ago, as Vietnam was being abandoned. After President Nixon's Watergate disgrace and resignation, a fed-up American public and a heavily Democratic-controlled Congress finally pulled the plug on our Saigon ally, allowing South Vietnam to fall.

Over the past year, the United States has pressed into service newly trained Iraqi army, police and security forces, replacing elements of the 140,000-plus US troops. But the Iraqi forces lack everything from body armor to tanks and helicopters. Major General Eaton, who in 2003–04 was in charge of training Iraqi security forces, says the United States needs another five years to train the Iraqi army, and as much as another decade to train and equip an effective Iraqi police force.

Gen. Barry McCaffrey, a hero in the 1991 Gulf War who visited Iraq and Kuwait this past spring, writes in an unpublished report: "We need to better equip the Iraqi Army with a capability to deter foreign attack and to have a leveraged advantage over the Shia militias and the insurgents they must continue to confront.

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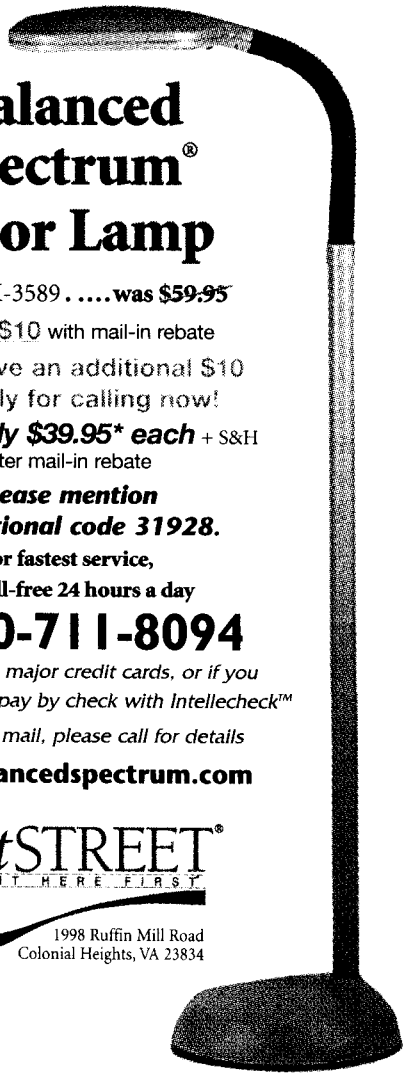

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The resources we are now planning to provide are inadequate by an order of magnitude or more. The cost of a coherent development of the Iraqi security forces is the ticket out of Iraq—and the avoidance of the constant drain of huge U.S. resources on a monthly basis."

Thus, the crucial "Iraqification" process has barely begun and is mostly still self-deception. *New York Times* Iraq correspondent Dexter Filkins reports that Baghdad has become "a markedly more dangerous place" over the past year. This undercuts "the central premise of the American project here: that Iraqi forces can be trained and equipped to secure their own country, allowing the Americans to go home," a replay of the failed Vietnamization scenario.

The retired generals' revolt may be inspired by their apprehension over a wider Mideast conflict spreading to potentially nuclear Iran, writes former Pentagon planner and now antiwar critic Karen Kwiatkowski, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and a razor-sharp PhD. Writing in MilitaryWeek.com, she speculates that the generals are trying to get rid of Rumsfeld now to head off a conflict with Iran. The Bush Administration reportedly has contingency plans to bomb Iran's UN-disapproved nuclear sites. Some underemployed Navy and Air Force officers are lobbying to strike Iran, but the overstretched ground combat forces overwhelmingly oppose it as the worst of all possible wars. She writes: "If Rumsfeld retires, we will not 'do' Iran under Bush 43." Such concern over Tehran is well founded. According to Kwiatkowski and retired Air Force Col. Sam Gardiner, American Special Forces are already secretly inside Iran, identifying potential targets for future air strikes. The Iranians are of course aware of their uninvited visitors.

'A U.S. military confrontation with Iran could result in [Iraqi Shiites'] attacking our forces in Baghdad.' —Gen. Barry McCaffrey (Ret.)

The obvious diplomatic recourse is for the Bush Administration to talk to Tehran about our pending exit from Iraq, but the White House refused to do so until late September, when the Bush family's longtime political fixer, former Secretary of State James Baker, entered the picture as a deal-maker. Baker is co-chair, with retired Indiana Democratic Representative Lee Hamilton, of the Congressionally created Iraq Study Group (ISG), which is due to issue a comprehensive report on US options in Iraq after the November elections. After a four-day visit to Iraq, Baker, Hamilton and the eight other members of the bipartisan task force returned to Washington with an obvious recommendation: Start talking to Tehran. After receiving President Bush's immediate approval, Baker invited an unidentified "high representative" of the Iranian government, as well as Syria's foreign minister, to meet with the ISG. Baker realizes the leverage is largely on Iran's side of the table.

An expert on Shiite Islam, Professor Vali Nasr of the Naval Postgraduate School, sees a glaring missed opportunity the ISG could help seize. He suggested in the July-August *Foreign Affairs* that "Iran will actively seek stability in Iraq only when it no longer benefits from controlled chaos there, that is, when it no longer feels threatened by the United States' presence. Iran's long-term interests are not inherently at odds with those of the United States; it is current U.S. policy toward Iran that has set the countries' respective Iraq policies on a collision course."

General McCaffrey warns that "U.S. public diplomacy and rhetoric about confronting Iranian nuclear weapons development is scaring neighbors in the Gulf. Our Mideast allies believe correctly that they are ill equipped to deal with Iranian strikes to close the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. They do not think they can handle politically or militarily a terrorist threat nested in their domestic Shia populations."

The recent war in Lebanon has only made the prospect of war with Iran more problematic. As Richard Armitage, the astute onetime Navy SEAL and former Deputy Secretary of State, told reporter Seymour Hersh: "When the Israel Defense Forces, the most dominant military force in the region, can't pacify little Lebanon [population: 4 million], you should think twice about taking that template to Iran, with strategic depth and a population of 70 million."

McCaffrey's report raises the possibility that US forces will have to fight their way out of Iraq. He says, "A U.S. military confrontation with Iran could result in [the radical Islamic Mahdi Army's] attacking our forces in Baghdad or along our 400-mile line of communications out of Iraq to the sea." The Bush Administration needs Iranian cooperation for the eventual safe exit of our troops, as General McCaffrey advises. This assumes that the Iranians will not risk World War III by trying to entrap our hostage Army in a humiliating Dunkirk-in-the-desert. After successful negotiations, the United States should be able to withdraw via the southern exit route leading through Kuwait to the Persian Gulf and the blue waters beyond.

Once we get our troops safely out, a newly elected, post-2008 administration in Washington may be able to begin reassembling America's scattered global allies to address the region's problems anew, next time multilaterally, and through diplomacy rather than pre-emptive unilateral military force.

America is a uniquely favored nation that redefines itself in each generation. But we have had a lifetime of embracing one democratic global war, and numerous presidentially inspired, politicized and secret smaller wars that have turned out badly. Sixty-five years after Pearl Harbor, we owe it to the past three generations to resume the debate on our national identity, suspended on December 7, 1941, and foreshortened on September 11, 2001.

In the post–cold war era, we have severely cut back our military manpower, reducing the regular Army to only 480,000 troops, but we have not cut back fantastically expensive Air Force weapons systems or the somewhat more useful but still gold-plated Navy. Nor have we redefined our strategic goals to fit realistically within reduced budgets. We have "paid" for the invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan by borrowing heavily from foreign dollar-holders, such as China, that are awash in trade surpluses, and have left debt service to future US generations.

A key argument in the ex-generals' indictment is this undeniable fact: Our armed forces are too small to police and

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reorder the world and intervene almost blindly, as we have in Iraq. That invasion acted out the world-changing daydreams of pro-Israel neoconservative policy intellectuals like Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle and others who gained warmaking power and influence atop the Pentagon but who evidently never asked themselves, Suppose we're wrong? What happens then? Sober, realistic Israelis privately fear the neocons' "friendship," and where it has led America, more than any Arab enemies. In the inevitable post–Iraq War tsunami of US political recrimination, such Israelis foresee Christian Zionist evangelicals, whose lobbying muscle in Congress was decisive in the run-up to the Iraq War, attempting to scapegoat the high-profile neocons and endangering Israel's all-important security ties to the United States.

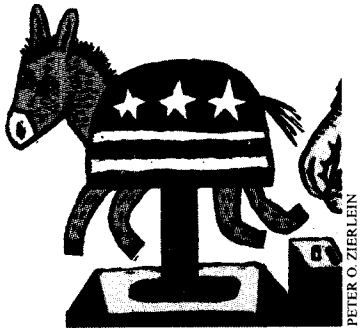
Growing public disgust and frustration with the Iraq War has begun to arouse a self-defeating desire to retreat into isolationism. Rather, the United States should revive the traditional but recently neglected realistic approach to foreign policy, as the ISG is starting to do, and it should begin with a renewed multilateral approach to peacemaking in the Middle East. ■

THE DEMOCRACY ALLIANCE HAS MONEY, BUT DOES IT ALSO HAVE A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE?

Big $$ for Progressive Politics

ARI BERMAN

On December 13, 2004, a month after the re-election of George W. Bush, twenty-five of the wealthiest donors in the progressive community gathered at the Four Seasons Hotel in Washington for an important strategy session. The group had collectively poured hundreds of millions of dollars into the effort to defeat Bush—and had nothing to show for it. Yet the despair of John Kerry's defeat provided an urgent call to arms. "The US didn't enter World War II until Japan bombed Pearl Harbor," Erica Payne, a New York political consultant who helped organize the gathering, told the donors. "We just had our Pearl Harbor."



PETER O. ZIERLEIN

The time had come for the donors to think differently about how to spend their money, just as conservatives had done forty years earlier when they launched a counteroffensive against liberalism and pushed the Republican Party far to the right. The meeting was led by Rob Stein, a former official in the Clinton Administration, who'd spent the last year and a half developing a PowerPoint presentation vividly mapping the rise of the conservative movement. He'd convened the meeting to encourage progressives to emulate the conservative funders by investing in the "guts" of politics—leaders and ideas and institutions that would last beyond one election. A month later the Democracy Alliance officially came into existence, as an exclusive collective of donors and one of the progressive community's most ambitious undertakings yet.

Almost two years along, the Alliance's 100 donors have distributed more than $50 million to center-left organizations and activists—a lot of money, yet still largely symbolic given the deep pockets of its members. Even as the donors pour millions into a new political infrastructure, however, problems have emerged that mirror many of the problems of the Democratic Party today and the progressive movement in general.

Ari Berman, a Nation *contributing writer based in Washington, DC, is a Puffin Foundation Writing Fellow at The Nation Institute.*

The first is determining what, exactly, the group stands for and wants to accomplish. Unlike the money guys who underwrote the right, members of the Alliance seem to lack strong ideological conviction about what the future ought to look like. And they do not have the militant perspective of outsiders eager to disrupt and overrun the party establishment. The right-wingers developed a core set of principles and stuck to them with an insurgent sense of persistence and aggressiveness. The wealthy liberals, in contrast, are still debating among themselves how to spend their money. Do Alliance members just want to be in the club or do they intend to change it? Do they want to stick with the party's stars—Bill and Hillary Clinton and their cadre of influential aides, who are preaching "moderation"—or are they ready to listen to new voices? Are they really committed, and prepared, to fund long-haul change?

To its credit, the Alliance has largely ignored the 2006 elections in favor of developing a five-to-ten-year strategy. But the much bigger presidential election season just around the corner will test the donors' long-term resolve. When the Alliance took an informal survey, the greatest fear among partners was that if a Democrat captured the presidency the organization wouldn't survive. Rob Johnson, an early board member, says the tension in the Alliance is between "party subsidizers" and "climate changers"—those who want to fund organizations that work toward more effectively electing candidates versus those who aspire to change the fundamental nature of political debate with a stronger set of governing principles.

A secondary problem is the struggle these well-meaning wealthy Democrats have had in getting their own house in order. Since its inception, the Alliance has been unabashedly elitist, while also poorly run. The criteria for choosing winners have been maddeningly opaque and the grants themselves contradictory. Far from speeding up the funding of progressive organizations, the Alliance has slowed certain things down. To stabilize the organization internally after almost a year of early stumbles,

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the partners chose as its managing director Judy Wade, a member of the elite firm McKinsey & Company, consultants to multinational corporations. The appointment perhaps reflected the group's uncertainty about its goals as well as the economic proclivities of its members. Wade normalized the Alliance operationally but further blurred its identity, increasing the likelihood that it will uphold the economic and political status quo.

"There's a cautious pathway that traditional Democrats take, and it's been hard to break that," says Johnson. If partners propose to fund the liberal Campaign for America's Future, they must also support its archrival, the DLC's Progressive Policy Institute (neither has received funding so far). A newly elected board led by members of the Alliance's progressive wing could make the group more adventurous. But an emphasis on collegiality indicates that risk aversion may well be the order of the day.

'There's a cautious pathway that traditional Democrats take, and it's been hard to break that.' —Rob Johnson, early board member

It's too soon to draw any conclusions about the Alliance. But sixty interviews conducted over the past five months suggest that it's not too early to worry that what began as a bold initiative may end up with as little to show as the earnest but largely ineffective philanthropy it was meant to supplant—which did good but didn't alter power. Indeed, the Alliance could bolster a timid Democratic Party establishment instead of transforming it. Of all the lessons from the right, the Alliance has forgotten arguably the most important: It takes both money *and* conviction to achieve victory. "It doesn't make sense to develop a strategy without a vision," says James Piereson, longtime executive director of the John M. Olin Foundation, which was one of the key half-dozen funders on the right. "It's a mistaken analogy that conservatives succeeded because of our tactics. I always thought conservatives were successful because of the ideas we were trying to sell."

It Started With the Phoenix

The Democracy Alliance began in the offices of the New Democrat Network (NDN) and on the computer of Rob Stein, who'd served as chief of staff to Clinton's Commerce Secretary Ron Brown. In 2002 and 2003 NDN, a creatively centrist Washington think tank, undertook a strategic review to figure out what the "higher purpose" of the organization and larger progressive movement should be. It called the effort the Phoenix Group, named after the mythical bird that rises from its own ashes and inspired by a character in a Harry Potter book. In the spring of 2003, NDN president Simon Rosenberg and Payne saw Stein's PowerPoint presentation, which he'd titled "The Conservative Message Machine Money Matrix."

"The narrative was not new," Rosenberg says. "But the degree of research and how he pulled it all together was the best explanation I'd seen of how we are where we are today." Namely, out of power. It wasn't a question of money—the five largest liberal foundations outspent their conservative counterparts annually by a 10-to-1 ratio—but rather how it was being spent. Back in the 1960s and early '70s, a handful of wealthy conservative businessmen like John Olin and Richard Mellon Scaife began generously bankrolling an array of policy centers, grassroots mass-based organizations, leadership institutes and intellectuals to beat back what the funders viewed as liberalism's assault on traditional structures like the family, the free market and the military. Major Democratic Party fundraisers and large foundations like Ford and Rockefeller mounted no similar coordinated defense of liberalism. It was this problem that Stein hoped to address through his presentation.

Payne set up a series of meetings for Stein on the East Coast with prominent Democratic Party donors. Stein presented his research using a lexicon the millionaires and billionaires understood. He called the largest conservative donors "philanthropic venture capitalists." The leaders of the conservative movement, such as Paul Weyrich and Grover Norquist, were "political investment bankers." The presentation helped convince the wealthy liberals that the Republican Party's recent successes were a logical outcome of determined movement building, not an accident of history.

During the fall of 2004, big donors were consumed with trying to oust Bush from office. But after Kerry's defeat, the nascent Alliance moved full speed ahead, officially beginning its existence in January 2005. Only the most committed and well-to-do donors were accepted into the high-priced club. Those joining included billionaires George Soros, Peter Lewis and Herb and Marion Sandler; major Clinton fundraisers Mark and Susie Buell and Bernard Schwartz; New York venture capitalist and longtime Clinton supporter Alan Patricof; Hollywood celebrities Rob Reiner and Norman Lear; wealthy high-tech Californians such as Working Assets founder Michael Kieschnick; and the AFL-CIO and the SEIU.

Joining the Club

Members, known as "partners," were required to pay a $25,000 entry fee, $30,000 in annual dues and a minimum of $200,000 per year to organizations recommended by the Alliance. The Alliance would not dole out money itself, but collectively the partners would meet twice a year through its auspices to decide which organizations to fund, forming working groups based on four priority areas: ideas, media, leadership and civic engagement. The working groups would present their recommendations to an investment committee made up of members of the board, who would pass them on to the entire group. Partners could then give money to the organizations they favored, voting with their checkbooks. An Alliance recommendation meant a valuable gold star for prospective progressive organizations. (The Alliance also put a premium on secrecy to protect the anonymity of its donors, actively discouraging members from speaking to the media and forcing grantees to sign nondisclosure agreements. Thus, of the dozens of partners and heads of organizations interviewed for this article, only a small number agreed to speak in detail on the record.)

In April 2005 fifty-plus partners arrived in Phoenix for a

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three-day conference. Stein, who announced at the outset of the 2004 Washington conference that he didn't want to run the organization, led the meetings on an interim basis. Even before Phoenix it had been decided that the Alliance would represent an ideological big tent of centrist Democrats, progressive Democrats and even a few disaffected Republicans. As a result, partners and staff, few of whom had known one another before or had a long track record in politics, downplayed their differences and agreed to govern by compromise—never an easy thing, especially among the rich. "We need infrastructure," says Rodger McFarlane, an adviser to Colorado multimillionaire Tim Gill, describing the views of the Alliance. "The right has taken over. That we agree on. Everything else is in play."

In those early days, much of the focus—and most of the problems—were internal, as chairman of the board Steven Gluckstern, a retired investment banker from New York, searched for a leader of the group. Meanwhile, for would-be recipients, the process of applying for money was bewildering: completely secret and seemingly changing all the time. Four days before the first round of funding, the board offered the plum $400,000-a-year title of managing director to Robert Dunn, president emeritus of Business for Social Responsibility. When Dunn declined they turned to Judy Wade, who'd been encouraged to run by former Clinton chief of staff John Podesta, although she had no prior experience in politics.

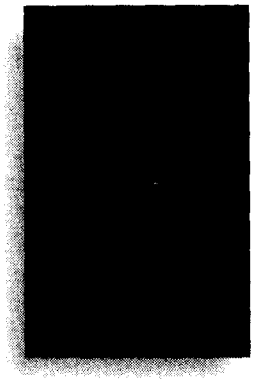
At an October 2005 meeting at the Château Élan Winery & Resort in Atlanta, Alliance partners agreed to give $28 million to nine groups. A few were smaller, edgier, more progressive organizations, like Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, a legal watchdog that made headlines by drafting an ethics complaint against Representative Tom DeLay. But the bulk of the money went to familiar names on the DC circuit, like the Center for American Progress (CAP), a think tank run by Podesta, and Media Matters for America, which monitors right-wing media and media bias, headed by former conservative journalist David Brock.

The small number of groups chosen, some of whom were already well funded, and the secrecy of the process infuriated organizations excluded from the club. No one knew exactly why the nine groups had been picked. Funding progressive infrastructure was all well and good, but no one bothered defining precisely what "progressive" meant. The partners themselves, with their business backgrounds, focused on the process by which groups were funded, not what they would do with the money. "There was an almost complete lack of actual substance," one adviser to a major donor said of the Atlanta meeting. The groups were selected to mirror the right but were far less anti-establishment than their conservative counterparts.

In preparation for the second round of grants, the Alliance began to open up. Wade normalized the selection process so that groups could apply for grants. To appease angry partners, she decided that funding would be determined by a changing menu of issue areas, not based on gaps compared with what the right has funded.

From a morale perspective, the next gathering, in Austin, Texas, the following May, was notably more successful than the

The Middle East



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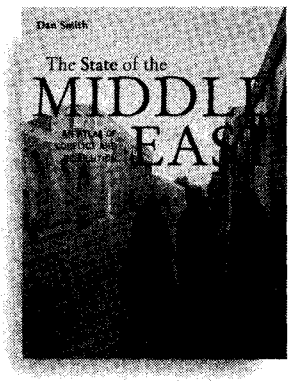

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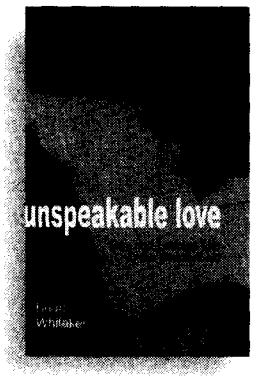

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one in Atlanta. Leaders of the progressive movement, like labor leader Andy Stern, were invited for panels on economics, foreign policy and media. Heads of organizations mingled freely with partners. And the groups themselves were noticeably more diverse than the initial gathering in Phoenix, where sixteen of seventeen presenters were white males. "I've made it a mission to hate the Democracy Alliance," the head of one prospective organization told me, "and I was pleasantly surprised."

The funding choices themselves presented more of a mixed bag. As a result of inside maneuvering by partners to fund their favorites, less money went to more groups—$22 million to sixteen organizations, with much of it only for one year. Grassroots organizations working on racial and economic justice issues that probably would have been overlooked in the first round, such as the Center for Community Change, USAction and ACORN, made the cut. On the other hand, the issue areas targeted for spring funding—voter mobilization (known as "civic engagement"), youth outreach, Hispanic media and religious left activism—while all deserving, seemed chosen specifically to coincide with upcoming elections. And some of the larger groups funded, such as EMILY's List and the Sierra Club, hardly needed the money. The Alliance was created to think long-term and to fund gaps in progressive infrastructure. But with two major elections coming up, short-term electoral needs were bubbling to the surface.

A surprise guest at the meeting was Bill Clinton, whose agenda seemed to be protecting his wife. But things didn't work out quite as planned. When Guy Saperstein, a retired lawyer from Oakland, asked Clinton if Democrats who supported the war should apologize, the former President "went fucking ballistic," according to Saperstein. Forget Hillary, Clinton said angrily during a ten-minute rant; if I was in Congress I would've voted for the war. "It was an extraordinary display of anger and imperiousness," Saperstein says.

The willingness to challenge Clinton at least temporarily reassured progressive Democrats that partners in the Alliance had a spine and wouldn't be a front group for "Hillary '08." But Clinton's response was a not-so-subtle warning to partners to avoid divisive issues, like the war, that might harm his wife in the next presidential election. Hillary herself has had a number of one-on-one sit-downs with members of the board, as has Howard Dean.

A month after the Austin meeting, a group of partners from the Alliance's progressive wing were elected to the board on an informal reform slate. They included Gara LaMarche of Soros's Open Society Institute, Anna Burger of SEIU, Drummond Pike of the Tides Foundation and Rob McKay, Taco Bell heir and president of the McKay Family Foundation. Many of these foundations have been at the forefront of funding progressive initiatives, like the campaign in California to pass a living wage. At a July retreat in Boulder, Colorado, McKay and Burger were elected chair and vice chair of the board. "This is the first really elected board," says Burger, a longtime union organizer. "It gives it legitimacy. People will feel more comfortable acting."

Unclear Priorities

But if McKay and Burger are to move the Alliance toward more effective progressive funding, they will have to rethink its priorities, starting with how many groups it funds and for how long. For the first round of grants, Alliance staff repeatedly stressed the importance of following four basic funding principles: Give organizations enough money to compete with conservatives; fund organizations over the long haul so they can achieve financial security and give them flexibility about how they use the money; make sure the groups work together; and urge the groups to use the money to affect public policy or engage with the political process.

In the second round of funding, however, the Alliance fell into the common liberal trap of needing to be all things to all people. After two grant cycles the Alliance is overextended. Wade says she hopes the Alliance, in conjunction with other funding coalitions, will eventually be able to direct an ambitious $500 million annually in grants. But with twenty-five groups under its tent, the Alliance will have to keep growing, by either recruiting new partners or convincing existing ones to give more, to be able to continue to fund those groups it has already agreed to assist. As a consequence, Alliance partners have cut back on some key priority areas, such as foreign policy, economics and media, in preparation for its third round of funding in Miami this November.

In the second round of funding, the Alliance fell into the common liberal trap of needing to be all things to all people.

Of these, the media cutbacks are the most problematic. Conservatives have aggressively recruited and funded an array of authors, scholars and publications who have formulated controversial ideas. Then they marketed those ideas, through media, to wider audiences with the goal of changing public policy. To date the Alliance hasn't been deeply involved in idea creation in the same way conservatives have been, but at least initially it expressed interest in funding better ways of getting a progressive message out.

At the first meeting in Phoenix, Alliance partners agreed that funding media would be a front-and-center priority. Instead, says one early member of the media committee, "it keeps getting shuttled to the back, over and over." Partly that was because at the beginning of the process few members were familiar with progressive media. In time, the media committee developed a plan to fund bloggers, investigative reporting and media reform efforts. Now, in the run-up to Miami, says another media committee member, that plan has been slashed in half. Media Matters did receive an $11 million commitment over three years—but it only tracks right-wing media rather than producing original content. Air America Radio was supposed to receive between $5 million and $8 million from the Alliance, but after months of negotiations it still has received no money. Other efforts, such as *The American Prospect* magazine and the start-up Progressive Book Club, are also in limbo.

A funding shortfall only partially accounts for the Alliance's inattention. There are philosophical reasons as well. Idea creation takes time, media development is expensive and both are risky. And the Alliance is highly risk-averse.

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Many of the right's premier ideas—welfare reform, rolling back détente with the Soviet Union, school vouchers—started off as a "riverboat gamble," as former Senate majority leader Howard Baker labeled Ronald Reagan's massive 1981 tax cut. "We did a lot of things at the beginning that we didn't know would work," says the Olin Foundation's Piereson. "If we needed a consensus it would've never gotten done." A conference of law students and professors partly underwritten by Olin in 1982 launched the Federalist Society, the right's premier legal organ. A $25,000 grant to the obscure social scientist Charles Murray led to his influential book on welfare reform, *Losing Ground*. And so on.

Risk aversion is also reflected in the Alliance's preference for underwriting organizations that won't upset the economic status quo. Podesta's CAP has been keen to avoid trade and globalization issues that separate the party elite from the rank-and-file Democratic base. While CAP won a $5-million-per-year commitment from the Alliance over three years, the unabashedly progressive Economic Policy Institute received a small, $250,000 planning grant. (The other economic organization funded generously by the Alliance, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, does research on issues like poverty in a nonpartisan fashion.)

The same topics that are off-limits in the Democratic Party—US policy on Israel, the bloated military budget, the role of big money in both parties, the grip of corporations—are shunned by the Alliance. Groups like MoveOn.org that target corporate Democrats, as the Club for Growth does to moderate Republicans, are brushed aside. "MoveOn.org scares a lot of these people," says an important partner.

Alliance staff originally conceived of an "innovation fund" to funnel smaller amounts of money (between $25,000 and $250,000) to newer ventures, such as the blogs and MeetUp-type gatherings, at the discretion of the managing director. That concept, too, has yet to get off the ground. Instead of directing the fund Wade, with her McKinsey background, appointed yet another committee to oversee it, reinforcing the inside joke that the Alliance at times resembles a "let's have a meeting about having a meeting" self-parody. The inability to move quickly and take risks in areas like media has persuaded a number of progressive donors to stay out of the Alliance, most notably Silicon Valley venture capitalists Andy and Deborah Rappaport, whose New Progressive Coalition is specifically aimed at finding and funding under-the-radar policy entrepreneurs and down-ballot candidates at the state and local levels. Joining the Alliance, Deborah Rappaport says, "would have constrained our ability to jump on new things as they appear."

McKay says he'd like the Alliance to be more decisive, but it's hard to tell whether that's possible. Taking a chance isn't easy when you need to get approval from 100 millionaires and billionaires. "It's tough to herd cats," former Alliance chair Steven Gluckstern liked to say, "but herding fat cats is harder."

Between 1972 and 1999, conservatives created at least sixty new organizations with mission statements modeled after that of the Heritage Foundation, a radical think tank at the time of its founding: "free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense." When pollster Celinda Lake asked a group of white

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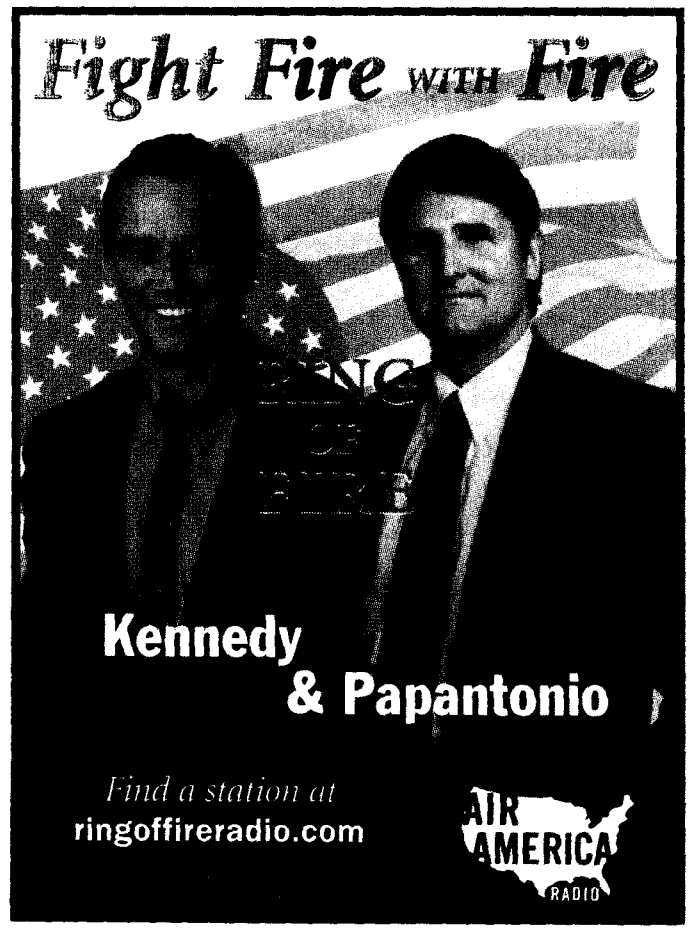

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Midwestern swing voters in 2004 what conservatives stood for, most of them repeated those catchphrases. When she asked the same question about liberals, half the voters responded, "I don't know."

In its early stages the Alliance, following the lead of Heritage, attempted to hammer out a mission statement for the organization. A year later the document is still a work in progress. Wade says the goal of the Alliance is to strengthen democracy. "That means an actively engaged citizenry...real solutions to critical issues...and a democracy not dominated by the far right," she says. Laudable goals, but hardly a road map for changing public policy. "There are pragmatists and there are activists," partners say Wade frequently tells them, "and I'm a pragmatist and that's where this organization should be." Needless to say, the early conservative activists, whether at *National Review* or on Barry Goldwater's 1964 campaign, couldn't have disagreed more.

The irony is that as the Alliance attempts to articulate its agenda, the old phase of conservative philanthropy—rich families like Olin and Scaife funding political change—is coming to an end and the conservative movement and Republican Party are running empty on ideas. Signature proposals, such as privatizing Social Security (and everything else) or eliminating the Education Department, have been widely discredited. "Obviously the left, if they can get themselves in position, can make a move," says Piereson.

The Bush era has jolted liberal philanthropists into action. No matter what the Alliance does, the impetus behind it will find other outlets. State-based donor collectives modeled after the Alliance have started in Washington, California, Ohio, Wisconsin and Colorado. Donors disaffected with the Alliance, like the Rappaports, have created their own organizations. Together these endeavors can create a market for entrepreneurs shopping ideas, just as conservatives did forty years ago. The notion of doing what wasn't getting done—thinking broadly, taking gambles, going beyond electoral politics and cultivating ideas and institutions and leaders—drew many of the partners to the table in the first place. Perhaps the best plan for the Alliance's future is remembering why it was started—and why conservatives won. ■

LETTERS
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

covered in depth, at length and with considerable insight by Townsend Hoopes and Douglas Brinkley in *FDR and the Creation of the U.N.* (1997), Mary Ann Glendon in *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (2001) and Stephen Schlesinger in *Act of Creation* (2003). I do not understand what purpose Borgwardt thinks is served by pretending her book has no antecedents. To have done so would not have undermined the worth of her own contribution.

Regarding her more substantive complaints about my review, I can only say that what seems to Borgwardt a "nuanced and textured argument about the New Deal" seemed to me both credulous and adulatory. It is not true that her book is a neutral historical portrayal. Rather, it is a work of history with an ideological agenda—to prove that the vision of the post–World War II international order of the Roosevelt Administration represented, to use the concluding words of Borgwardt's introduction, "the promise not only of a new American foreign policy but of a new vision for the world." Borgwardt is perfectly entitled to view the New Deal model for the world as a promising one, and to put forward the thesis that had the cold war not halted its implementation, we would all be better off today. But she is not entitled to deny that this thesis permeates her book.

Our difference is fundamental. Borgwardt finds the case for what legal scholar Harold Koh has called America's good exceptionalism "compelling." I do not. Borgwardt, in her allusions to Iraq, clearly believes that the problem with American power is its current unilateralism. "A nation which once served as a beacon of hope" is now pervasively "exporting fear," she writes. In other words, the fault lay with the cold warriors who abandoned FDR's Grotian vision in the late 1940s, and with George W. Bush, who abandoned multilateralism in the aftermath of 9/11. I'm afraid the fault is rather deeper than that.

DAVID RIEFF

ANN COULTER, BALDING LIAR

Dannebrog, Neb.

■ Eric Alterman ["The Liberal Media," Sept. 18] writes that Ann Coulter "deserves to have a wing named after her in the Liars and Lunatics' Hall of Fame (as soon as one is built)." The National Liars Hall of Fame, established in 1990, is located on the main street of Dannebrog, Nebraska, and flourishes. Ann Coulter, however, is not eligible for induction because membership in the NLHF is open only to amateurs.

ROGER WELSCH

Baton Rouge, La.

■ Many thanks to Katha Pollitt for laying out the truth about the historical non sequitur "Islamo-fascism" ["Subject to Debate," Sept. 11 and 25]. Militant Muslims have been terrorizing each other and outsiders for more than a millennium; fascism is a twentieth-century phenomenon. If anything, Al Qaeda and the Taliban resemble Puritan Roundheads run amok. The label was obviously concocted to divert attention from the Bush Administration's own crypto-fascist proclivities. To compare a penny-ante dictator like Saddam Hussein to Hitler—well, that's just pathetic. Pollitt's quip, however, about "balding heads" spewing prowar propaganda leaves me puzzled. Is Ann Coulter losing her hair?

WILLIAM F. BERTOLETTE

AND SPEAKING OF ISLAMO-FASCISM...

Silver Spring, Md.

■ Re Katha Pollitt's September 25 mention of "noted foreign policy expert" Rick Santorum. Ricky, addressing an Opus Dei gathering in Rome in January 2002 (per *National Catholic Reporter*'s John Allen), declared, "I regard George W. Bush as the first Roman Catholic President of the United States." What about JFK? Well, Ricky thinks JFK was all wet in his 1960 defense of church-state separation. Say goodbye, Rick.

EDD DOERR

SHIP OF STATE

Grass Valley, Calif.

■ This summer I was swimming with a friend, and we decided to move to the other side of the river. It meant holding our chairs, hats, sunglasses and magazines above our heads. On my last trip, to get my reading material—*The Nation*—I slipped. Before I went under, I threw it at my friend and yelled, "Save *The Nation*!" As she held it out dripping, she said, "I think it's too late for that," and added, "and I'm not talking about the magazine."

VIRGINIA MORAN

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

■ The credit for Wayne Barrett & Dan Collins's "Cashing In on Catastrophe" [Sept. 25] was incomplete. After the indication that it was adapted from their new book, *Grand Illusion*, this credit was missing: "Copyright © 2006 by Wayne Barrett and Dan Collins. Published by arrangement with HarperCollins Publishers." R.O. Blechman did the page 2 art last week. In Katha Pollitt's last column, the name of NARAL's political director, Beth Shipp, was misspelled.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Modern Love

BARRY SCHWABSKY

ART CZAR: The Rise and Fall of Clement Greenberg.
By Alice Goldfarb Marquis.
MFA. 321 pp. $35.

EYESIGHT ALONE: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses.
By Caroline A. Jones.
Chicago. 553 pp. $45.

Everything Clement Greenberg wrote as an art critic was exactly what Baudelaire said criticism should be: partial, passionate, political—embodying "an exclusive point of view, provided always the one adopted opens up the widest horizons." It couldn't have been fun for artists to find themselves athwart Greenberg's exclusivity, though not many had to face judgments he'd been storing up for years, as Georgia O'Keeffe did when he reviewed her retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in 1946: "The lapidarian patience she has expended in trimming, breathing upon, and polishing these bits of opaque cellophane betrays a concern that has less to do with art than with private worship and the embellishment of private fetishes with secret and arbitrary meanings." And that was one of his more sympathetic comments on O'Keeffe. She sounds like Laura Wingfield polishing her glass menagerie. How things have changed in sixty years: The very qualities Greenberg invoked to bury O'Keeffe would now more likely be used to praise an artist's work.

Yet his criticism remains alive, because of a rare ability to do two things at once: to deliver a clear, coherent and seemingly authoritative synthetic overview of art's development through time and even (or so he imagined) into the near future—a view so forcefully argued that it served either as a guide or as a lightning rod for dispute—and to articulate intimate aesthetic experiences with acute vividness. His attack on O'Keeffe, for instance, is imbued with a pungent sensuality, suggesting that his revulsion is rooted in an intense sensitivity to what the art really is; even those who adore O'Keeffe's work might learn something about why they love it, as well as about why someone else would hate it. Indeed, Greenberg could anticipate what some would hate in the contemporary painting he loved best, Jackson Pollock's: "I already hear: 'wallpaper patterns,' 'the picture does not finish inside the canvas,' 'raw, uncultivated emotion,' and so on, and so on," he wrote in a 1948 review for *The Nation*. Yet he was sure he knew better, and startlingly enough, he was also sure that he would know better still before long: "I am certain that 'Phosphorescence,' whose overpowering surface is stalagmited with metallic paint, will in the future blossom and swell into superior magnificence; for the present it is almost too dazzling to be looked at indoors." Greenberg was a past master at taking with one hand in order to give with the other, thereby assuming an air of prophetic wisdom even when acknowledging his own limitations.

Greenberg's criticism combined a passionately partisan theory of art's development over time with a vivid sense of the aesthetic experience.

The son of Eastern European Jewish immigrants who had arrived in New York not very long before his birth in 1909, Greenberg was a slacker full of sexual frustration and inchoate ambition well into his 20s. Irregular employment meant all the more opportunity to read intensely—poetry, fiction, German philosophy—and to frequent New York's few modern galleries. Yet there was nothing to suggest that he had any calling for art criticism or indeed any calling at all. For all his drawing and versifying, his only notable accomplishment was his supreme

Barry Schwabsky, an American art critic and poet living in London, is co-editor of the international review section of Artforum. *His most recent book is* Vitamin P: New Perspectives in Painting.

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confidence in his own judgments, especially negative ones: Letters of the early '30s declare the Whitney Museum "rotten" and O'Keeffe, already, "lousy, by the way."

But a knack for such judgments can hardly have looked like a way to make a living. After working here and there around the country for his father's chain of stores and falling into a short-lived marriage in California, Greenberg ended up with a civil service job back in New York, where he mingled with writers and artists in Greenwich Village. He immersed himself in the ideas of Leon Trotsky and became friendly with Lionel Abel, a literary critic for *Partisan Review*, and Harold Rosenberg, who would also later emerge as a famous art critic—and as Greenberg's despised rival. Through Rosenberg he met a young painter named Lee Krasner, who invited him to lectures by her teacher, the German émigré painter Hans Hofmann. Although Greenberg's fantasies of becoming an artist himself never led anywhere, Hofmann's ideas remained a constant reference.

As war loomed in Europe, then, Greenberg was nothing more than one of the multitude of Village dilettantes and hangers-on. It was a letter to *Partisan Review* (where he had already published a brief book review) that launched his career. Just why he felt the need to take exception to the boilerplate statement, in an essay on the Soviet cinema by Dwight Macdonald, that "Western art has for centuries lived without associations with the masses," may never be known, but in doing so he must have been expressing ideas that had been stewing in him for a long time: "It must be pointed out that in the West, if not everywhere else as well, the ruling class has always to some extent imposed a crude version of its own cultural bias upon those it ruled," he wrote. "Chromeotypes, popular music and magazine fiction reflect and take their sustenance from the academicized simulacra of the genuine art of the past. There is a constant seepage from top to bottom, and Kitsch (a wonderful German word that covers all this crap) is the common sewer."

Kitsch made Greenberg's reputation. Invited by the magazine's editors (and encouraged by Macdonald) to work his ruminations into publishable form, he produced "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," which appeared in *PR*'s fall 1939 issue. Immensely ambitious, the essay opened up a vast perspective: Greenberg put the dialectic between formal and popular cultures at the center of cultural history: Mass art, kitsch, made itself out of the remains of moribund cultivated forms, but the motor of high art's development was in its recoil from the condition of kitsch, the potential fate of its own efforts. Greenberg's references ranged brashly across centuries of history and shuttled with no less confidence from poetry to painting to music. The prose was pithy, forceful, punctuated with memorable formulations: "If the avant-garde imitates the processes of art, kitsch, we now see, imitates its effects"; to the ruling class, avant-garde art "has always remained attached by an umbilical cord of gold." Most important of all was Greenberg's political perspective, a fusion of Marxism and Modernism. Part of the essay's appeal must have been its tone of disillusioned realism even as it guardedly evoked the possibility that socialist revolution could preserve high culture. But in retrospect the essay's realism doesn't seem to go much deeper than its tone; in particular, it turns on the fantastic notion of an imaginary Russian peasant asked to choose between Picasso and the Russian academic painter Ilya Repin—a rhetorical ploy that mainly serves to show that Greenberg had never met a peasant. But while painting the masses as incapable of producing any real culture of their own, he reserved his strongest scorn for a ruling class that was abandoning its putative role as patron of high culture.

TIME LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

Clement Greenberg, 1948

Greenberg's next big essay, "Towards a Newer Laocoon," developed at length one of the subsidiary themes of "Avant-Garde and Kitsch"—a theme whose formulation he specifically credited to Hofmann, that of the Modernist artist's resort to his own medium as his work's subject and inspiration. Here, painting came more to the fore, yet Greenberg's broad argument continued to take in poetry and music on equal terms. Over the next couple of years he wrote brief reviews of exhibitions by Miró, Léger and Kandinsky, as well as an essay on Klee, but otherwise one would have assumed literary criticism to be Greenberg's main concern. It was only in 1942, when he began reviewing exhibitions regularly for *The Nation*, that he became an art critic in the narrow sense of a reviewer on the beat, and for the next few years his art reviews were still interspersed with essays on writers as diverse as Stefan George, Anthony Trollope and Sholom Aleichem.

This last name in particular reminds us that Greenberg always wrestled with the condition of "what the West now knows as the Jew." It was never easy. Alice Goldfarb Marquis, in her new biography of Greenberg, can quote any number of anti-Semitic barbs littered through his early correspondence. "Squalling Jew bastards from the very best homes in Long Island" is how he described the kids he had to look after as a teenage camp counselor; Hollywood was "a lot of sporty looking little Jews and fairy scenario writers and high school girls." Much later, Greenberg would reminisce about taking the subway alone from the Bronx to Manhattan—getting out and seeing "the crowds of gentiles—and it was liberating." One might wonder whether Jewish self-hatred could be a key theme in the critic's life, were it not that he could be equally disdainful of the goyim, discerning in his ex-wife and mother-in-law, for instance, "a mean Gentile quality...so cold, so just, so sensible." Besides, for an anti-Semite to have earned his living from 1944 to 1957 as an editor for the *Contemporary Jewish Record* and its successor, *Commentary*, would have taken an iron constitution, something the hypersensitive Greenberg never had. Considering the topic in a 1950 essay, Greenberg quoted the idea that "'group pride' and 'self-hatred' seem inextricably mixed." A critic for whom Sholom Aleichem "goes deeper than Dickens" is not one given to underestimating his people's accomplishments. His own verdict was that "a quality of Jewishness is present in every word I write," and in his published writings, Greenberg could be a sensitive and subtle examiner of the dilemmas of Jewishness, always with an autobiographical undertone. When he speaks of Kafka's "apprehension" of "the outside world—the world of officials and of strangers on the street, of janitors and peasants and coachmen," one feels that he might be thinking of himself at 12 emerging from the subway into the gentile world of Manhattan. The sense of the unknown is the same, whether experi-

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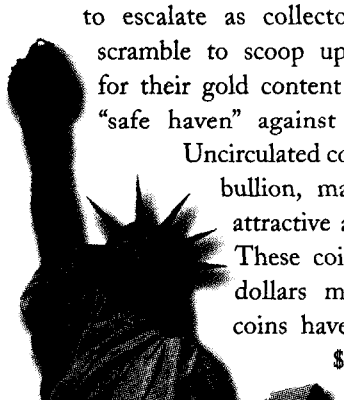

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enced as threatening or liberating. And when he attributes Kafka's difficulties with the world to his complex relations with his father, the impression of identification is even stronger: The Jewish world that Greenberg didn't want to be a part of was that of the "barbarian" *shmatte* merchant who had thrown his son's drawings away and spent "sleepless nights over the fear that I may turn out to be a weakling in life."

Greenberg's propensity to articulate his deepest desires for art in terms of classical Greece thus takes on a very particular coloring—from the declaration in "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" that "it's Athene whom we want: formal culture with its infinity of aspects, its luxuriance, its large comprehension" to the later demand, in "The Present Prospects of American Painting and Sculpture" (1947), for "a bland, large, balanced, Apollonian art." Greenberg was a sort of latter-day Hellenistic Jew, attempting to reconcile Hebraic particularity with cosmopolitan (not to say Arnoldian) sweetness and light. In contrast with this enviable cosmopolitan breadth, he felt, Jews in Europe and Asia, having "lived self-absorbed in the midst of alien peoples," had grown "fundamentally uninterested in the social and cultural life that surrounded [them] on every geographical and political side." Such was the cramped and blinkered outlook his parents had brought with them from the land of the czars, and from which he sought to liberate himself. Get clear of it he certainly did. But if Greenberg viewed one side of the wider surrounding gentile culture through the prism of Apollo and Athena, he never lost sight of the culture's shadow side, represented by the idea of the peasant, who, though powerless like the Jew, had a stronger "relation to the sources of power in a feudal society" and thus impunity in his brutality toward Jews.

What's best remembered about Greenberg's years as art critic for *The Nation* is his campaign on behalf of Pollock, who by then had married the critic's old friend Lee Krasner. It's one of those rare instances of a critic staking a daringly long position on a contemporary and turning out spectacularly right. Greenberg's quondam girlfriend, Jean Connolly, had already picked Pollock out of a group show as one to watch in a review she had published, but only Greenberg was ready to pronounce the work in Pollock's first solo exhibition as "among the strongest abstract paintings I have yet seen by an American." The inner workings of Greenberg's response to Pollock are sifted in great detail and with some surprising results in *Eyesight Alone*, a massive new study by Caroline Jones, an art historian at MIT who has already made a considerable impression in the field with her first major (and equally unwieldy) book, *Machine in the Studio*, an examination of the changing sense of what artistic work might be in the American art of the '60s. But what's probably most important is how, in hailing Pollock's work, Greenberg struggled to reconcile the antithetical tenets of his criticism: on the one hand, the need to experience the artwork as a self-contained aesthetic fact; on the other, the question of whether the work is historically progressive, i.e., the extent to which it shows awareness of "the direction in which the pictorial art of our times must go in order to be great." For Greenberg that direction ran toward purity of medium and elimination of subject matter; in painting this meant the dismantling of pictorial space. He came to depend greatly on the distinction between "major" and "minor" art as a way of finessing the tension between autonomy and history. A formidably agile rhetorician, he turned his contradictions to advantage. As critic Hal Foster once put it, "When Greenberg was challenged on matters of history he would defend his judgement as a matter of taste, and when contested on taste he would appeal to history."

By 1949, though, with "a bellyfull of reviewing in general," Greenberg gave up his beat. In the '50s this led to a series of important essays on individual Modernists from Cézanne through Soutine and Léger to Pollock and David Smith. Beginning with "'American-Type' Painting" in 1955, and continuing with "Modernist Painting" (1960), "After Abstract Expressionism" (1962) and others, he also began to rethink "the direction in which the pictorial art of our times must go in order to be great." These efforts became all the more concerted as it became clearer that the direction taken by much of the most notable art from the late '50s onward—the "Neo-Dada" of Johns and Rauschenberg followed by Pop, Minimalism, Conceptual Art and so on—could never lead, in Greenberg's eyes, to greatness. These artists had learned from Modernism to seek the borderline between art and non-art but did so not by rigorously purifying a medium but by arbitrarily mixing media in search of "the merely odd, the incongruous, and the socially shocking." Greenberg's preferred tendency—the "color field" painting of Jules Olitski and Kenneth Noland and the welded steel sculpture of Anthony Caro—seemed secondary at best to the art world at large; to some, they were not avant-garde but kitsch. And yet despite his aversion to much of the new art of the time, the publication in 1961 of *Art and Culture*, a selection of his es-

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says, gave Greenberg new authority in the eyes of an emerging generation of critics like Michael Fried and Rosalind Krauss. This is the Greenberg who fascinates many art historians today—the one who engaged in ideological battle with the suddenly emergent Duchampian tradition and struggled to theorize an art he could not abide. By the end of the '80s, Greenberg declared that taste had not so much declined as "just gone away." No wonder that after the 1967 piece with the self-explanatory title "Complaints of an Art Critic," Greenberg's written work thins out drastically. From then until his death in 1994, his criticism consisted mainly of lectures delivered at museums and universities around the world (he was now freelancing for the State Department, having defected to conservatism like many ex-Trotskyists) and conversation in the studios of a chosen band of sympathetic artists. It's a particular loss that Alice Goldfarb Marquis, Greenberg's latest biographer, has little to say about Greenberg as a studio visitor. Apparently she did not interview Olitski, Noland, Caro or any of the other artists who were close to him from the late '50s on. There will never be a definitive biography of the critic without some account of what transpired in their studios.

This is not to say that Marquis (the author of biographies of Alfred Barr Jr. and Marcel Duchamp) adds much to our knowledge of Greenberg in any other way. She's hardly done more than repeat a story already told in the 1997 biography by Florence Rubenfeld, while embroidering it with material from Greenberg's correspondence between 1928 and 1943 with a college buddy, Harold Lazarus, published in 2000 as *The Harold Letters*. Rubenfeld's biography was not without problems of its own, but at least she'd had the benefit of lengthy interviews with her subject. Whenever Marquis uses a phrase like "he told an interviewer," a glance at the back matter will confirm that the "interviewer" was the biographer who got there first. Marquis may have lowered Rubenfeld's sensational tone down a notch or two, but that's not necessarily a virtue when contending with a figure whose private life was as messy—some would say vile—as Greenberg's.

Readers who want a better understanding of what Greenberg wrote and why, and above all of why what he wrote was so significant, would in any case be better off if they ignored both biographies and did the harder but more rewarding work of reading Jones's dense, indeed sometimes maddeningly verbose, "critical history." Like Marquis, Jones leans on biographical material culled from Rubenfeld and *The Harold Letters* along with Greenberg's own writings as well as the reactions to (and against) Greenberg by the art critics and historians who followed in his footsteps; but she brings to all this an analytical intensity, an almost ferocious determination to dig into the text, that makes the biographers' declarative flatness seem dull by comparison. The hundred pages she spends analyzing Greenberg's writings on Pollock—minutely sifting the critic's words through her own searching re-examination of the paintings he had in view—are alone worth the price of the ticket. As Jones's title suggests, her subject comes from the attachment to medium that Hofmann had revealed to Greenberg back in 1938 and that had been a constant of the critic's thought from "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" to the end of his life—the notion that painting could be a purely "optical" art. For Jones, his articulation of this idea was central to Greenberg's influence because it fed into and accelerated a larger historical process that she calls "the bureaucratization of the senses." It's a suggestive point, yet it remains strikingly undeveloped, particularly for a writer as attentive to detail as Jones. (She's the sort of writer who finds it necessary to gloss Greenberg's jibe at Alfred Stieglitz's circle of artists—"Too many of the swans in his park are only geese"—with a paragraph outlining the significance of the swan as a symbol in Western culture.) She never properly defines bureaucratization, nor does she engage with the large sociological literature, from Max Weber onward, that deals with the development of bureaucracy as an aspect of modernization. More oddly, given Greenberg's immersion in Trotskyist thought in the late 1930s and early '40s, she never discusses Trotsky's critiques of the Soviet Union as a degenerate bureaucracy. Even allowing Jones's point that "art forms were positioned as elements of a system whose function was to regulate feeling (rather than merely 'show' it)," there should be some explanation of why bureaucratization in particular should have been the great social force at work in this system, especially when artists themselves were unlikely to have much firsthand experience of it—unlike more traditional themes of the social history of art, such as class. Still, the strength of Jones's book is the sense of how complicated a thing it was for Greenberg to become Greenberg. While the kind of art viewer Greenberg seemed to be calling for was not, as Jones says, "a dallying subject, a daydreaming subject, a narrativizing subject, a distractedly scanning subject," a bureaucratized viewer would have been nothing like the ne'er-do-well who wrote "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." ■

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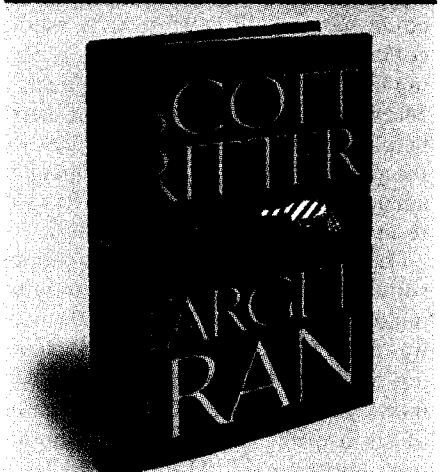

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A Metaphysical Materialist

RICHARD WOLIN

BERLIN CHILDHOOD AROUND 1900. By Walter Benjamin.
Translated by Howard Eiland. Belknap. 192 pp. $14.95.

THE WRITER OF MODERN LIFE: Essays on Charles Baudelaire. By Walter Benjamin.
Edited by Michael Jennings. Translated by Howard Eiland, Edmund Jephcott, Rodney Livingston and Harry Zohn. Belknap. 306 pp. $15.95.

ON HASHISH. By Walter Benjamin.
Translated by Howard Eiland and others. Belknap. 180 pp. $14.95.

FIRE ALARM: Reading Walter Benjamin's "On the Concept of History." By Michael Löwy.
Translated by Chris Turner. Verso. 148 pp. $27.

Who was the real Walter Benjamin? Was it the otherworldly aesthete who believed, along with the German Romantics, that literature has a redemptive purpose, and who was indifferent to whether a literary work was actually read, since it is ultimately a metaphysical end in itself?

Or was the real Benjamin the self-proclaimed "strategist in the literary struggle," the follower of Bertolt Brecht who, during the 1920s and '30s, became enamored of Soviet literature and film, with their odes to factory work and agricultural collectivization, dismissing art for art's sake as an unconscionable bourgeois indulgence in an age of class struggle?

Or was it the passionate Kabbalist, the friend of Gershom Scholem who proclaimed that his interpretive ideal was the Talmudic doctrine according to which every Torah passage contained forty-nine levels of meaning; who pronounced, without a trace of irony, that any philosophy that could not foretell the future by reading coffee grounds was worthless; who, following the fall of France in 1940, argued that Marxism could prevail only if it enlisted the help of theology; and who claimed that the goal of revolution was not so much the emancipation of future generations as the resurrection of vanquished ancestors?

In fact, each of these portraits captures something of Benjamin, who contained multitudes. Yet this theoretical eclecticism was not the reflection of a man who could not make up his mind. The "real" Benjamin was in fact a constellation (to use one of his favorite terms) of complex oppositions, most notably Marxism and Jewish messianism. He struggled indefatigably against conceptions of the left that risked selling short its ultimate emancipatory potential—for example, Lenin's prosaic definition of communism as "the Soviets plus electrification" or the equally mundane social-democratic conception of socialism as state ownership of the means of production. Marxism's fatal error, Benjamin believed, was to have uncritically imbibed the shallow and deterministic worldview of nineteenth-century "scientism"—a perspective that reflected the nineteenth-century bourgeois faith in progress through achievements in industry and technical innovation. Scientism worshiped industrialism rather than striving to transcend it.

WALTER BENJAMIN ARCHIV, AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE, BERLIN; FOTO: STUDIO JOËL HEINZELMANN

Walter Benjamin, 1929

Benjamin was convinced that Fourier's fanciful phalansteries contained infinitely more "political truth" than Engels's *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. Revolution meant a qualitative leap into the future, a utopian break with a long history of class domination. After all, if socialism merely perpetuated the status quo by giving it a slightly different shape and form, what was the point?

This was one of the reasons that theological notions figured so prominently in Benjamin's work. He believed that historical materialism could ill afford to leave discussions of Paradise or the Last Judgment in the hands of deceitful clerics and prelates. Marxism's utopian promise, for Benjamin, had more to do with the redemption of fallen humanity than it did with equitable transfer payments or a progressive income tax. As he put it: "My thought is related to theology as a blotter is to ink. It is totally absorbed by it."

Benjamin's idea of a social utopia hinged on his theory of "experience." Like many thinkers of the time, he believed that experience was among the casualties of advanced industrial society, which had rendered everyday human interaction entirely functional, utilitarian and impersonal. He shared Max Weber's belief that the modern world had undergone a process of "disenchantment." The march of progress had cruelly denuded life of all mystery, solidarity and human warmth. Unlike Weber, however, Benjamin urgently advocated the re-enchantment of the world.

Theological messianism was, of course, one way of re-enchanting the world and making authentic experience possible again. Another, even more important approach to re-enchantment, for Benjamin, resided in literature, which he depicted as a repository of utopian strivings. Thus did he ingeniously transpose his youthful fascination with the aesthetic utopianism of German Romanticism onto his later political preoccupations as a Marxist. Stendhal once observed that beauty contains a *promesse du bonheur*, a promise of happiness, and Benjamin treated this remark with the utmost seriousness. Benjamin was a socialist for whom *Remembrance of Things Past* possessed perhaps greater political salience than Marx's *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*. In one revealing passage of *The Arcades Project*, his unfinished magnum opus on nineteenth-century Paris, Benjamin wrote: "What Proust meant by the experimental rearrangement of furniture in matinal half-slumber, what [the philosopher Ernst] Bloch meant by the darkness of the lived moment, that is what this work should accomplish." *Remembrance*

Richard Wolin, Distinguished Professor of History and Comparative Literature at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, is the author of many books, including Walter Benjamin: An Aesthetic of Redemption *(Columbia) and, most recently,* The Frankfurt School Revisited *(Routledge).*

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of Things Past was Proust's magisterial effort to furnish life with a utopian semantic plenitude that it otherwise lacked, thereby transforming it into "lived experience," or *temps véçu* (literally: "lived time"). In the *Arcades Project*, Benjamin, the nonconformist Marxist aesthete, sought to do the same thing for the ends of class struggle.

Yet Benjamin knew that by infusing Marxist thought with the redemptive components that had been banished by the nineteenth-century *esprit de sérieux*, he was playing a dangerous game. For while orthodox Marxists prattled on about the prosaic ends of "scientific socialism," "experience" (or *Erlebnis*) had become the exclusive province of the reactionary right—*Lebensphilosophie*, the German Youth Movement and literary Fascists like Ernst Jünger. Benjamin's lifelong theoretical battle was to wrest the concept of experience from the right's monopoly and to turn it to the ends of the revolutionary left.

The Proustian ideal of the redemption of "lived experience" lies at the heart of Benjamin's idiosyncratic memoir, *Berlin Childhood Around 1900*. Benjamin was a child of privilege. He grew up in Berlin's opulent West End, cared for by servants as much as by his own parents, and he spent his summers at the family's vacation home in neighboring Potsdam. In *Berlin Childhood* he offers us a cityscape of the German capital as seen through the eyes of a precocious and impressionable youth. He revisits his favorite childhood haunts—the zoos, swimming pools, grammar schools, parks and railway terminals—and milks them for utopian potential. Early in his narrative, he recalls one of his favored sites of enchantment: the loggias that were a common feature of turn-of-the-century Berlin courtyards. In a child's overheated imagination, at one point even the caryatids seem to come alive:

> For a long time, life deals with the still-tender memory of childhood like a mother who lays her new-born on her breast without waking it. Nothing has fortified my own memory so profoundly as gazing into courtyards, one of whose dark loggias, shaded by blinds in the summer, was for me the cradle in which the city laid its new citizen. The caryatids that supported the loggia on the floor above ours may have slipped away from their post for a moment to sing a lullaby beside that cradle...sounding the theme through which the air of the courtyards has forever remained intoxicating to me.

As remembered, Benjamin's Berlin childhood seemed to offer a buffer against life's insecurities and misfortunes, which his family came to know well when their fortune was destroyed by the catastrophic inflation of 1923. From then on, Benjamin was left to fend for himself. At one point in *Berlin Childhood*, he reveals a secret childhood fantasy: to sleep in mornings undisturbed. "I must have made that wish a thousand times," he observes wistfully. The youthful hope was eerily realized in adulthood when Benjamin, having joined the ranks of the Weimar Republic's growing army of proletarianized intellectuals, found himself perpetually under- or unemployed.

Baudelaire famously observed that "genius is no more than childhood recaptured at will." Benjamin, who devoted several brilliant essays to Baudelaire, collected by Michael Jennings in *The Writer of Modern Life*, was of the same opinion. Adulthood, by contrast, was marked by lost illusions and a fateful accommodation to the reality principle. In a sense, Benjamin regarded childhood much as he did modern literature: as an invaluable repository

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President Bush is preparing an astonishing U-turn on global warming, senior Washington sources say. After years of trying to sabotage agreements to tackle climate change he is drawing up plans to control emissions of carbon dioxide and rapidly boost the use of renewable energy sources. Administration insiders privately refer to the planned volte-face as Mr. Bush's "Nixon goes to China moment", recalling how the former president amazed the world after years of refusing to deal with its Communist regime.

—The Independent, *September 17*

September 2

I didn't know jack about boats growing up. Or polar bears. My parents raised me in the Texas desert and both were uncommon, but how boats floated always fascinated me. Not until I was 7 did I realize they stay afloat because the magnetic properties of fish underwater repel the hull. Which is why Laura and I don't eat too much fish—magnetic poisoning.

But this morning I accidentally dropped a Post-it note in my cereal. And it floated! Now we all know Post-it notes are neither magnetic nor boats, so have I had it wrong all this time? Or do I switch to eggs in the morning? Unsure. Hungry. Note: Ask VP to consult FDA.

September 3

I met Diane von Furstenberg tonight. We hosted a White House dinner for the King of Belgium and there she was in the greeting line. I tried to turn away but she caught my hand. "Mr. President," Diane von Furstenberg said, "I am a famous fashion designer. You may know the wrap dress I invented in the seventies."

I was tempted to ignore her. Or break down crying. Instead I shook her hand and thanked her for coming, but I did not say what I was thinking, which was, Fursty, I have loved your utilitarian chic for decades, but you have let me down. All that pomp and flash in the Spring 2007 collection that I previewed on the internets? Have you lost your mind? Because me and Suzy Menkes almost lost our lunches.

I Blackberry'd Barb and Jen from the can and advised them to hit Marc Jacobs in the morning. Fursty has lost her thrust.

September 6

Re: my environmental policies, some expert on CNN said, "A stitch in time saves nine." And I thought, Doesn't anyone speak clearly anymore? Nine what?

September 8

A secret for you, diary: Contrary to the news reports, I did read President Ahmadinejad's letter. I read it in bed when Laura was sleeping with a warm glass of milk. And I'll admit that in all of Imanutjob's gobbledygook there was an interesting observation. "How can a follower of Jesus Christ, who believes in human rights and open societies, make war, have countries attacked and people destroyed? Sir, you are putting the chicken before the egg."

"What an idiot," I thought. "Chicken *before* the egg? How can you have a chicken first when chickens *come out* of eggs?" I drank some milk. Then I stuck my fist in my mouth to keep from spitting the milk on Laura. Because, diary, I was floored. I almost fell out of bed. Bopboparoobop was right—in order to have an egg in the first place, you got to have a chicken.

September 10

People make a fuss about what I read. As though I'm not a big reader. Like my wife isn't a former librarian. Reports, secret memos—between 10:30 AM and 4:15 PM my reading glasses barely leave my nose.

Tom Wolfe is a favorite of mine. The man's written fifteen books—he is a proliferating author—and I always thought I liked best the one about the magnetic acid. But just this morning on Air Force One, I finished *Charlotte Simmons*. Talk about liturgy! I tapped the cover and told an aide, "This guy isn't just a novelist, he's *the* novelist."

It's time Updike got another audit on his taxes. I told the aide that, too.

September 11

Busy couple days. 9/11, obviously. A time for sorrow, remembrance across this great nation, melon platters. We'd been noshing all day, but Laura still wanted a fancy lunch in Manhattan. I said I wasn't hungry. She said, "Then you can't have dessert." I said, "Then what do you call this Jawbreaker in my pocket?"

I was in a funk. The gang left for a restaurant, and in the hubbub I ditched my security detail and hiked up to Central Park to see the polar bears. For some reason me and polar bears get along. Them in New York City, me in DC—we're equally out of our natural elements. We both may look happy, but it's a sham. Being President doesn't guarantee you fit in with the Washington crowd. It's a lonely job. You don't even have a name. It's always "Mr. President, I love you," "Mr. President, sign this," "Mr. President, Mr. Cheney will see you now."

I bought a ticket for the zoo and found the bears' cage the same time as a young mother and her son. The three of us realized our despair at the same time: The bears were gone. We stared around the big enclosure—fake rocks, rubber toys, a scummy pond—but there weren't any animals.

"Global warming, folks," said a zookeeper strolling by. "It's too hot this summer. Bears got heat stroke."

The boy cried the same time as me. I tried to give him my candy but his mother yanked him away. I stared at the bears' enclosure a little longer and wiped my eyes and thought, You're the President. Sure you're in a cage, too, but maybe you can do something to help that boy. To save those bears. Maybe you can do something to save yourself. Isn't things going to change?

Global warming, the man said. I'll have to see about that. ■

Rosecrans Baldwin's stories have appeared in the New York Times, New York *magazine and on NPR's* All Things Considered. *He is a founding editor of the online magazine* TheMorningNews.org.

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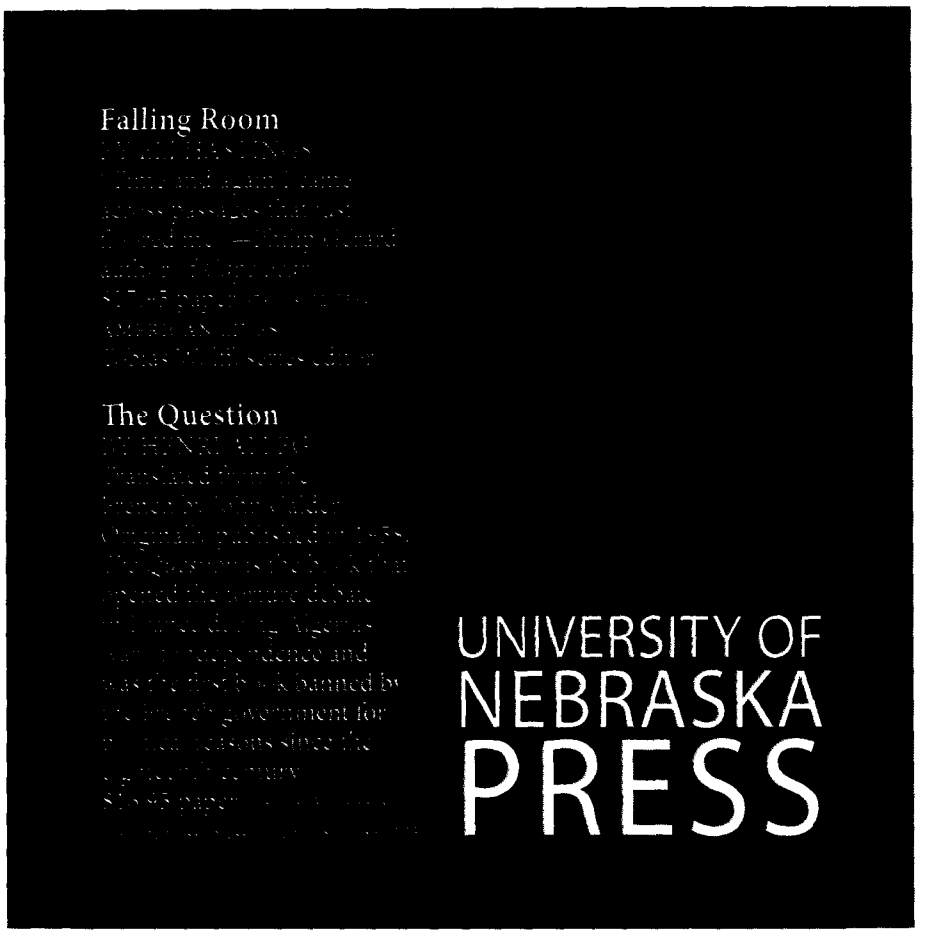
of utopian longings and dreams in an age of industrialized degradation. *Berlin Childhood* represents his own Proustian effort to recapture lost time, a time that any revolution worthy of the name would seek to restore.

The loss of childhood had a profoundly political dimension for Benjamin. He began drafting his memoir in 1932, the year before Hitler's seizure of power and a few months before his own flight to exile in Paris. As he explains in the book's lyrical opening paragraphs, writing was a way of inoculating a future émigré against "homesickness." The disconsolate prospect of exile—and of far greater horrors to come—haunted the work's composition at every step. As Benjamin put pen to paper, he sensed that he might never again set eyes on his beloved Berlin haunts: the alcoves, gardens, public squares, monuments and *Hinterhöfe* (courtyards).

Oddly, for a book on childhood, Benjamin's memoir seems far less interested in people—family or friends—than in places and things. Benjamin's Berlin is an enchanted landscape where experience is defined by chance encounters, or what the Surrealist writer André Breton called *le hasard objectif* (objective chance). As Benjamin remarks appositely: "Not to find one's way around in a city does not mean much. But to lose one's way around a city, as one loses one's way in a forest, requires some schooling." Thereby, losing oneself paradoxically becomes a consummate act of self-discovery.

Berlin Childhood recounts Benjamin's Surrealist education. He strove to bring to bear on the German capital the same lyrical sensibility that had served Baudelaire so well with regard to Paris in *Les Fleurs du mal*. In poems like "A Corpse" and "The Litanies of Satan," Baudelaire formulated one of the key ideas of art for art's sake: An object can be of keen aesthetic interest not only despite being ugly or grotesque but because it is ugly or grotesque.

Like Baudelaire and Breton, Benjamin believed that certain objects and locations possessed talismanic significance. One senses that for Benjamin objects possessed a durability and profundity he found missing in human beings. This was not just a matter of his misanthropy, or of his isolation from other people. (According to Scholem, Benjamin was celibate from his divorce in 1930 until his death in 1940.) Benjamin's preference for objects reflected a theoretical decision. He was enamored of Baudelaire's theory of "correspondences," in which objects appeared as fraternal spir-



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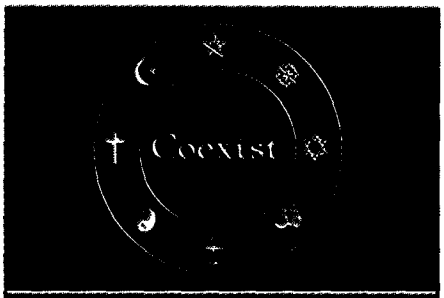

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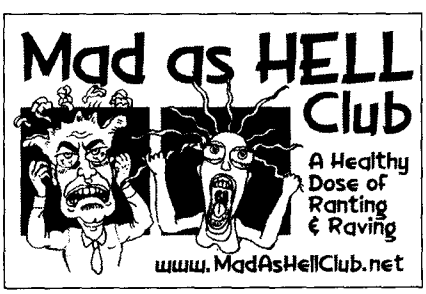

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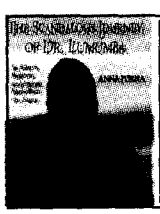
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its or ensouled. As Benjamin put it, such objects display a magical capacity to "return our gaze."

It was Baudelaire, too, who inspired Benjamin's experiments with drugs. Benjamin had long been fascinated by the "alternative experiences" championed by turn-of-the-century spiritualists—among them Chinese ancestor worship cults, hallucinations, delirium, mystical visions. In a sense, these "profane illuminations," as he called them, were gateway drugs for a man seeking inner-worldly transcendence, for liberation from a modern world that stood under the sign of natural science. At the age of 27, he discovered Baudelaire's *Artificial Paradise*, "an attempt," as he put it in a letter to Ernst Schoen, "to monitor the 'psychological' phenomena that manifest themselves in hashish or opium intoxication for what they have to teach us philosophically." He added: "It will be necessary to repeat this attempt independently of this book."

On Hashish contains transcriptions of Benjamin's various drug-induced experiences—with hashish, mescaline and morphine—from the late 1920s and the '30s. He was introduced to narcotics by an old university classmate, Ernst Jöel, who had become a physician and needed subjects for his clinical research on the medical effects of hallucinogens. Benjamin eagerly volunteered, joining an illustrious list of writers—Baudelaire, Thomas de Quincey and Aldous Huxley—who tried to enhance their creative powers and expand their mental horizons via the magic of intoxicants. His drug experiences show once again how singularly committed he was to the program of the avant-garde: overcoming the limitations of the self by subjecting it to an array of pulverizing, Dionysian, ego-transcending influences.

Had Benjamin's drug experiments occurred in the 1960s, no one would have noticed. At the time, a new breed of paisley-clad pied pipers and snake-oil salesmen, led by Timothy Leary, celebrated hallucinogens as the royal road to inner experience—the key to unlocking the "doors of perception." Ultimately the whole enterprise fizzled; the mysteries of the universe remained undisclosed. More often than not, these counterculture experiments left their "subjects" in an inarticulate stupor.

Benjamin's drug-related experiences were not that much different from yours and mine. (Full disclosure: Here I speak from experience; and yes, I did inhale.) He gazes across the room at an oven, which turns into a cat. A desk turns into a fruit stand. He suddenly imagines that in the next room, "events such as the coronation of Charlemagne, the assassination of Henri IV, the signing of the Treaty of Verdun, and the murder of Egmont might have taken place." After ingesting hashish in Marseilles, he wanders into a local restaurant. As the waiter appears to take his order, Benjamin is paralyzed by indecision lest he "offend" any of the various entrees on the menu by not ordering them. Ultimately, he settles on pâté de Lyon, which he giddily translates as "lion paste." Emerging from the restaurant, he becomes slightly disoriented. Since he still has the munchies, he enters another restaurant and orders dinner again. I was cheering for Benjamin on almost every page. There is something touching about his willingness to test his theories, his schoolboy romanticism. But it's unlikely that any of the philosophical epiphanies he sought actually materialized.

Benjamin himself seems to have developed serious doubts as to whether such profane illuminations could "win the energies of intoxication for the revolution" and produce a break with the profane continuum of history. By his own admission, smoking hashish had proved alternately enlightening and stupefying. And as he became increasingly committed to political radicalism, he began to worry that profane illuminations might divert energies from the revolution. Hashish is not exactly known for improving soldierly discipline, any more than booze is. As Benjamin put it in a more sober passage, profane illuminations might "subordinate the methodical and disciplinary preparation for revolution...to an undialectical conception of the nature of intoxication."

Nevertheless, Benjamin tried to persuade his friends in the Frankfurt School that intoxication (dialectically conceived, of course) could serve the cause of liberation. In 1938, the year of the Munich crisis, he wrote to Max Horkheimer, director of the New York–based Institute for Social Research, imploring him to "recognize how deeply certain powers of intoxication are bound to reason and its struggle for liberation." In a passage that uncannily anticipates attempts in the 1960s to fuse politics and countercultural hedonism, Benjamin continues:

> What I mean is, all the insights that man has ever obtained surreptitiously through the use of narcotics can also be obtained *through the human*: some through the individual—through the man or through the woman; others through groups; and

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> some, which we dare not even dream of yet, perhaps only through the community of the living. Aren't these insights, by virtue of the human solidarity from which they arise, truly political in the end?

Horkheimer, a bourgeois Marxist of consummate sobriety, was unmoved.

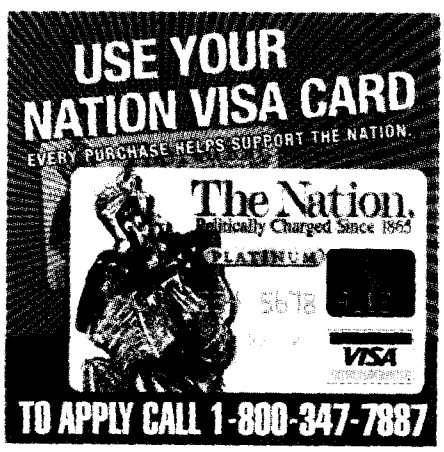
Benjamin, however, was no flower child *avant la lettre*. For he possessed something that the counterculture radicals of the 1960s notably lacked: an awareness that things could go disastrously wrong, that one's own life could go up in smoke. Benjamin's family had been reduced to penury in an instant, and Fascist barbarism was tearing apart his world. Not surprisingly, catastrophism went hand in hand with his utopianism. They were the flip sides of a steep, all-or-nothing wager on the imperative of inner-worldly redemption. In *One-Way Street* (1928), his Surrealist-inspired meditations on contemporary cultural politics, there is an aphorism called "Fire Alarm" that perfectly illustrates this dialectic. Michael Löwy has taken "Fire Alarm" as the title of his splendid reflections on Benjamin's philosophy of history. Löwy, a Paris-based, Brazilian-Jewish thinker of Trotskyist bent, is an accomplished historian of ideas who has written extensively on twentieth-century Jewish political messianism. He sees keen parallels between the development of interwar Central European utopian thought (Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Georg Lukács) and contemporary Latin American liberation theology—the movement that formed him.

In "Fire Alarm" Benjamin offers a critique of the nineteenth-century doctrine of progress. Marx, he notes, suggested that revolutions were the locomotives of history—a characteristically nineteenth-century vision of progress. But what if, Benjamin conjectures, the train we're on isn't headed to a classless society but to a preordained catastrophe? In that event, shouldn't we reach for the emergency break and stop the train? The same critique of progress forms the core of Benjamin's "On the Concept of History" (1940). During the 1930s, many on the left believed the Soviet Union represented the West's last best hope against Nazism, particularly after the Spanish Republic was abandoned by the Western democracies. The 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact brutally crushed those expectations. "On the Concept of History" is Benjamin's response, an explicit and heretical attempt to fuse Marxism and theology. Benjamin develops his ideas over the course of eighteen "theses." Löwy's *Fire Alarm* presents us with a paragraph-by-paragraph exegesis.

Among Benjamin devotees and admirers, "On the Concept of History" has acquired canonical status. It has had an enormous methodological impact on the fields of history and cultural studies. For it is here that Benjamin urges the historian to "brush history against the grain" by writing history not from the perspective of the victors but from the standpoint of the oppressed—a call that, in a sense, anticipated a whole school of history written from the bottom up. "On the Concept of History" is also where Benjamin recommends that the historian actively "blast open the continuum of history" rather than merely passively chronicle events.

Thesis I opens with a memorable allegory in which Benjamin cryptically suggests that since Marxism wasn't up to the historical fight against Fascism, it must take theology into its service, in which case it would "win" every time. The text is suffused with suggestive theological insinuations and tidbits. Löwy provocatively suggests that Benjamin's messianism reveals an anti-evolutionary, activist dimension that renders it compatible with the Marxist notions of revolution and class struggle.

I am not so sure. For all its rhetorical allure, it seems to me, Benjamin's resort to theology evokes the desperate musings of a man on the run who has run out of political options. A few months later he would take his own life, ingesting a massive dose of morphine on the Franco-Spanish frontier in order to avoid deportation to Vichy France as a "stateless person." Eighteen years earlier Benjamin concluded his essay on Goethe's *Elective Affinities* by remarking, "Only for the sake of the hopeless are we given hope." The recourse to theology in "On the Concept of History" was Benjamin's way of hoping against hope. ■



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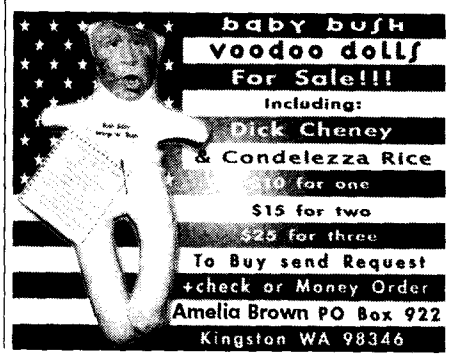

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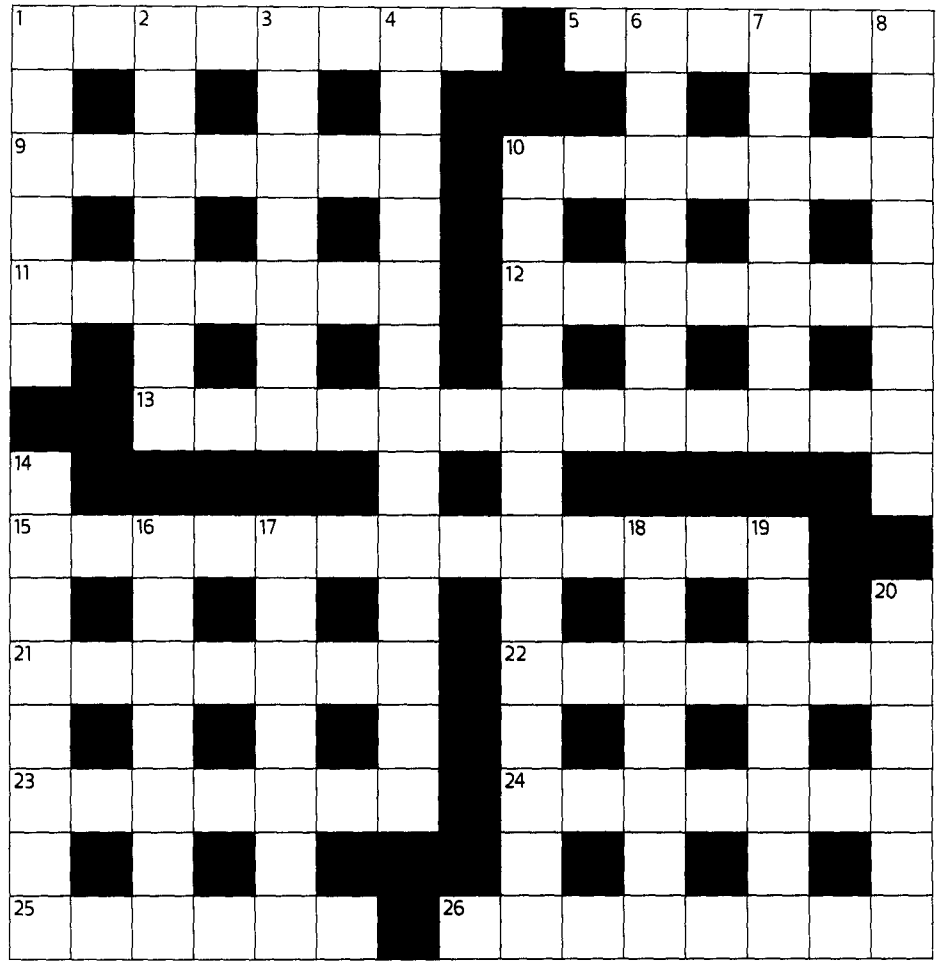


ACROSS

1 Kinda neat—going to town shows a lot of stick-to-it-iveness! (8)

5 Look for it in Siam, *mon oncle*, made from a colorless, pungent gas. (6)

9 Why the prospective diner may have had to wait is outstanding! (7)

10 Most intoxicated—you get this from crazy heights. (7)

11 A famous chief has nothing sort of close, with a following like this. (7)

12 Altered, altered, is the pedal for one's foot. (7)

13 Does it have a sneaky way of dropping dangerous things? (7,6)

15 What the kid has when eating ice cream on a hot day, or just those who can't resist picking things up. (6,7)

21 Ripped up with quite a stir, and a lot of wind. (7)

22 What a golfer hopes to beat gets Kate crazy to take things in. (7)

23 A snappy answer would be to tear nothing set incorrectly. (7)

24 Shake involuntarily, with a quiet warning—and the milk container finished. (7)

25 Describing shame, or game, for some. (6)

26 Take complete advantage of something in a purposeful manner. (8)

DOWN

1 Not coming up around the finish, but the tissue is tough. (6)

2 Ads for something, but definitely not such things as sherbets. (7)

3 The last thing one would expect to see in rail transport, with a Bronx cheer, just in case. (7)

4 A literary decline concerning autumn, as Italians see it. (3,4,2,4)

6 Crazy goat men could be a source of your power. (7)

7 Found in Dover, dubiously, Les Paul was first to do it. (7)

8 Our sweat, mixed together, lasts longer. (8)

10 Not stations where one would expect weddings to take place! One might yell, "Hold your horses, there!" (8,5)

14 Misshapen toes on a famous Red, which is understood by only a select few. (8)

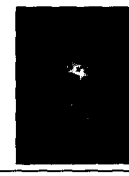
16 Concerning work, it's how some letters start. (2,5)

17 A lot of hot air provided by bad actors when the relatives are around. (7)

18 What's the point to having a weapon, and kind of turn with a very loud indication? It would keep the receiving apparatus warm. (7)

19 In a disc, and a LP, it could cause a lot of talk! (7)

20 Place a wager on Charles? It's not fair to the cause, if you do. (6)



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Diabetes Healing Secret

Here's important news for anyone with diabetes. A remarkable book is now available that reveals medically tested principles that can help normalize blood sugar naturally ...and greatly improve the complications associated with diabetes. People report **better vision, more energy, faster healing, regained feeling in their feet**, as well as a reduction of various risk factors associated with other diseases.

It's called *"How to Reverse Diabetes"* and it was researched, developed and written by a leading nutrition specialist. It shows you exactly how nature can activate your body's built-in healers once you start eating the right combination of foods. It can work for both Type I and Type II diabetes and people report it has helped reduce their insulin resistance. It can give diabetics control of their lives and a feeling of satisfaction that comes from having normal blood sugar profiles.

The results speak for themselves. *"How to Reverse Diabetes"* is based on research that many doctors may not be aware of yet. It tells you which delicious foods to eat and which to avoid. It also warns you of the potential danger of certain so-called "diabetes" diets. Diabetics are calling this program "very outstanding"..."a tremendous help"... and saying it made "a difference in my life." *"How to Reverse Diabetes"* is based on documented scientific principles that can help:

- **Eliminate ketones and give you more abundant energy**
- **Make blood sugar levels go from High Risk to Normal**
- **Stimulate scratches and scrapes to heal faster**
- **Improve eyesight**
- **Improve your balance**
- **Help numb feet regain a level of feeling**
- **Reverse neuropathy and resultant heel ulcers**

Improvement may be seen in other areas as well, such as **lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol** and **reduced triglyceride levels**. There may also be a reduction of other risk factors associated with: **heart attacks, stroke, retinopathy, kidney damage**.

What's more, it may help improve **short term memory** and make you feel **more alert** and **no longer chronically tired**. Improvements of **double vision** or *diplopia* may also be experienced.

If you or someone you know have diabetes, this could be the most important book you'll ever read. As part of a special introductory offer, right now you can order a special press run of *"How to Reverse Diabetes"* for only $12.95 plus $2.00 shipping. It comes with a 90 day money back guarantee. If you are not 100% satisfied, simply return it for a full refund...no questions asked.

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Senior Citizens with Money in the Bank Should Read This Before It's Too Late

If you have worked hard all your life and managed to put away a nest egg, you might end up losing most of your life savings because of a defect in Medicare.

If you or your spouse suddenly become ill and require extended nursing home care...NO ONE will help you with the nursing home bills. Medicare won't and neither will your health insurance. By law you are responsible for the nursing home bills yourself. Only after you have used up virtually all of your money, will Medicaid step in. That's because Medicaid, like Welfare, only aids the poor. By some estimates, the average couple's life savings can be wiped out after only 13 weeks of nursing home care.

Rich people don't have to worry because they can afford super-expensive special nursing home insurance, while the poor are taken care of by Medicaid.

Now that just doesn't seem fair to working people with a lifetime of hard-earned savings. The system they have supported with tax dollars, seems to have forgotten them. Savings intended to provide security in retirement, or help for children, can quickly go up in smoke.

The fact is, if you don't know how to protect your assets, here's what can happen to you. By law, before Medicaid will pay nursing home bills, you may have to spend all your countable assets except $2000 (or as low as $1500 in some states). Countable assets mean not only money in checking and savings accounts...but also any funds in CD's, IRA's, Savings Bonds, Mutual Funds, stocks, whole life insurance, annuities and other types of investments, as well as most trust assets.

They can also take a vacation home or a second car. In addition, (except for a small personal spending allowance and a health insurance payment allowance) your entire Social Security or pension check can be taken to cover nursing home expenses. What's more, if you are single or widowed, you can even lose your house.

According to the federal law called the Spousal Impoverishment Act, if one spouse requires extended nursing home care, the healthy spouse can be forced to surrender HALF of their combined countable assets. And if you have a sizeable estate, they can legally take MORE THAN HALF.

Is there anything you can do to stop this nightmare from happening to you? Yes. You are protected by law and can use several legal techniques to place your countable (or vulnerable) assets into the uncountable (or protected) category. The problem is, most people are not aware of their legal rights. Unfortunately, most people think Medicare will take care of them, so they unknowingly leave their assets vulnerable and in jeopardy.

Your legal rights and the many methods of protecting your money are now revealed in "How to Protect Your Financial Security." This financial self-defense manual tells you simple legal procedures for preserving your money and warns of pitfalls to avoid. Here is some of the valuable material you learn:

- **Legal ways to turn countable (or vulnerable) assets into uncountable (or protected) assets**
- **How to protect your house from being sold to pay your nursing home bills**
- **How to protect a second car or vacation home**
- **If you give your money to your children without following these precise guidelines, a nursing home could get your money anyhow**
- **What you need to know about Living Trusts**
- **What lawyers never tell you about protecting your will**

As a hard-working taxpayer, you have a legal right to protect your life savings for yourself, your spouse or your heirs. You don't have to be rich to have peace of mind. You just have to follow the easy steps outlined in "How to Protect Your Financial Security."

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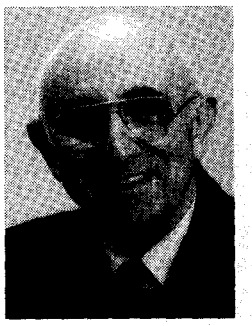

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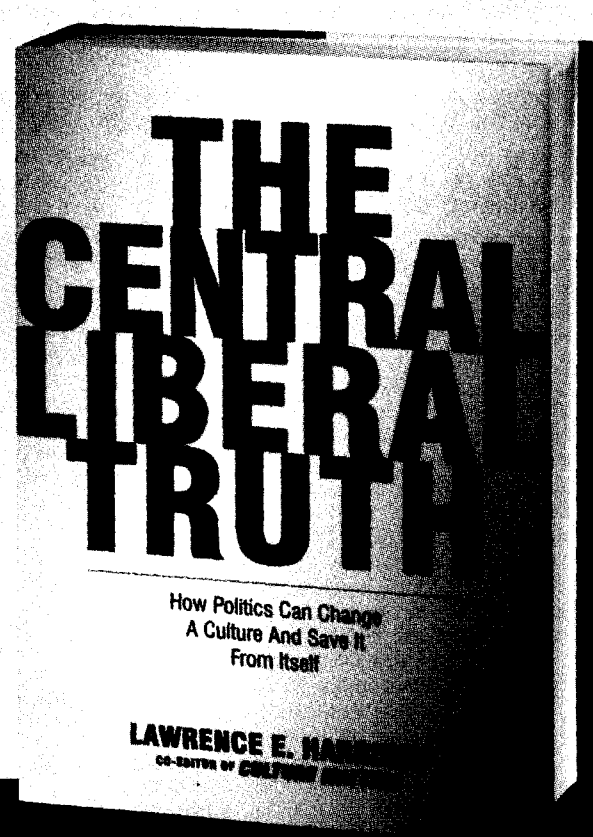

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